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UNO ALL OVER THE MAP

IF UNO is to be put on the map, the sooner it is all over the map the better. If disputes in the Middle East may cause "friction," threatening international relations, so may troubles in the Far East, Europe or even Argentina. The Russians have raised the issues of Greece and Indonesia in terms of undiplomatic acrimony, and since they waited till the Persian complaint was before the Security Council, the Soviet Note carries with it an unnecessary tit-for-tat flavour. But the net result is one that the British should welcome. In powerful phrases Mr. Bevin recently stated that the alternative to an anarchy of warring Powers is world government, and clearly the first stage towards world government is the readiness of the most powerful States to abandon their claim to unilateral settlement of disputes within their zones. If three such questions as Persia, Indonesia and Greece were really settled internationally on the basis of ascertained facts and to the advantage of the inhabitants, UNO would have made a good start—much more than compensating for the still inconclusive haggle over the appointment of a Secretary-General, the disappointment of the small Powers at being denied the opportunity to debate (however academically) the control of atomic energy, and the unpromising approach so far made to the Trusteeship problem in the Levant, S. Africa and the Pacific. In any case, the world would benefit by having all three "situations" ventilated in the Security Council. If this session of UNO had ended with a polite pretence that there were really no danger spots calling for attention, a grotesque air of unreality would have been imported into the proceedings.

This, we assume, is the attitude the British will adopt. They could, of course, raise a legalistic debate by contending that there is no real parallel between the position of Persia, on the one hand, and Greece and Indonesia on the other. They could argue that in the first case the appeal to the Council was made by the legal Government of a member State, which protests against "interference by the Soviet Union through the medium of their officials and armed forces in the internal affairs of Iran." M. Sophoulis has made no such protest; indeed, he has publicly affirmed that British troops are in Greece with the consent of the Greek Government. The Russians might observe that we were more responsible for setting up the Sophoulis Government than the Russians are for the independent administration of Azerbaijan. The British could argue that it is only the presence of British troops that prevents a White Terror, and that, since it is our intention to evacuate Greece as soon as possible, there is no problem for UNO. The Soviet Union would no doubt retort that the ultimate effect of British intervention in Greece may be to produce a regime whose attitude to Greece's northern neighbours may cause "friction" which the Security Council is enjoined by Article 34 of the Charter to investigate. A similar wrangle could easily take place over Indonesia, where the British could say that no dispute exists between the British and Dutch Governments and that none can exist with Indonesia, since Dr. Sjahrir's administration has no juridical status. But recognition of Dr. Sjahrir by one of the Great Powers could legally alter that situation at any moment.

Obviously all such argument would be foolish and ruinous to UNO. The wording of the Charter is widely drawn. It is a political instrument deliberately designed to cover all dangerous situations, enabling any State member to invoke Article 35 if armed clashes are occurring in any part of the world or a situation exists in which such a clash seems likely. To make use of the Charter to deal with three actual "situations" is to fulfil its intentions, not, as some seem to suggest, to create a crisis in UNO's affairs. UNO exists to deal with crises that would grow worse if not tackled. Of course, the present "crisis" may peter out, for the resignation of M. Hakimi's Government may result in the formation of a Government in Teheran more inclined to negotiate directly with Moscow; in that case Persia's appeal to the Security Council may be withdrawn. If not, we hope that the Council will display its ability to examine the positions in Persia, Greece and Indonesia alike without dividing into pro-Russian and pro-British factions. If the Council cannot discuss these sort of situations objectively, without necessarily seeking to put this or that Power in the dock as defendant, what good purpose can UNO ever serve?

After de Gaulle

It is difficult, as we write, to judge what success will attend the re-patching of the Coalition from whose crumbling structure General de Gaulle has leaped. The General's resignation was followed by a series of Party manoeuvres—a pre-election *pas de trois* led by the Communists. They will now claim that the clear-cut, logical solution, a two-party Marxist Coalition, was made impossible by the Socialists' rejection of working-class unity, and that the withdrawal of the Communist demand that Thorez should be Prime Minister in the Three-Party Cabinet on which the Socialists insisted was a "patriotic sacrifice" for which they are entitled to electoral reward. The Socialists, in their turn, will claim that they made reciprocal sacrifices in withdrawing the candidature of Vincent Auriol, whom the Communists refused to accept as Premier in view of his past associations with de Gaulle. They will also doubtless argue that the Communists' proposal for a two-Party Government was insincere, in the sense that it was put forward only because Socialist refusal was certain: the Communists, on this line of reasoning, would not welcome too large a share of responsibility between now and the Spring elections for the unresolved economic muddles in France. The eventual choice of Felix Gouin as Prime Minister, liked and trusted though he is as an honest man, is a compromise solution which solves nothing. One of the conditions on which M.R.P. have agreed to join the new Coalition—that there should be strict observance of a Party truce—is unlikely to be fulfilled by the other Parties; Gouin may have difficulty in re-allocating portfolios acceptably; and M.R.P. have revived an old and bitter controversy in demanding "freedom" for religious schools. The new Government's life is likely to be both brief and uneasy.

The State of the Nation

Congress is now so hostile to the President that only a bare quorum attended to hear his Message. Timid and inadequate though Mr. Truman's demands appear, Congress is in no mood to concede anything which savours of State intervention. If it continues to reflect the employers' opposition to wage increases, Congress will be unwilling to give legislative approval to the fact-finding boards whose proposals for the steel and automobile industries—accepted by the striking unions—are still bitterly resisted by Big Steel and General Motors. In its complacent satisfaction with the present boom outlook, Congress will no more feel inclined to pass the Full Employment Bill than it has been for the past few months, in spite of the President's reiterated warning against "feverish and opportunistic" attempts to cash in on favourable business prospects. Mr. Truman will look in vain for any serious Congress decisions on the "grave post-war problems" which he envisages, once uncontrolled private enterprise has squeezed the last dividend out of its present opportunities. It is also uncertain whether Congress will be disposed to renew the laws under which the Administration controls prices and the allocation of scarce materials. Yet these four proposals are the props of Mr. Truman's domestic policy, already whittled down under pressure. He has begun a half-hearted effort to fight Congress too late. Appeals for powers to check inflation, unemployment and the present offensive against wages and working conditions fall on the deaf ears of Congressmen excited by the approach of "normalcy," and conscious that they, not the President, are the master. President Truman's good intentions are not enough to recover for him Mr. Roosevelt's ascendancy over an obdurate legislature which acts as if it were ignorant even of the first principles in contemporary economics. The rest of the Message was a long-winded repetition of America's foreign policy, remarkable only for Mr. Truman's announcement that civilian personnel are to replace the soldiers in the administration of the American Zone in Germany. Neither the two million workers on strike nor their employers are likely to pause in their struggle to hear this faint voice crying from the wilderness of the Capitol.

Korea, Indo-China and Burma

Pieces are being gradually fitted into the mosaic of post-war, post-Japanese-controlled Asia. Soviet representatives are holding a conference with Americans in Seoul (capital of the American Zone) on urgent economic questions concerning North and South Korea, and working out measures for the co-ordination of administration in the two areas. This gives effect to the Moscow decision by which Korea was to be jointly controlled for a period up to five years. In the Soviet-controlled Zone of North Korea reports describe enthusiastic demonstrators carrying posters which declare that "The Moscow Conference decision guarantees the freedom, independence and rebuilding of a democratic Korea." In the American Zone, there seems to have been resentment that independence is not being immediately granted to Korea. The same political consciousness is alive in Indo-China, where the French, in General de Gaulle's words, "have set their feet." This was an odd way of stating that 30,000 French troops are fighting in Indo-China, south of the 16th parallel, destroying villages wherever they meet with resistance. North of that parallel, the Viet-Nam Government controls civil administration, maintains an army and has now completed the disarming of 35,000 Japanese. On January 12th, a General Election was held, and Ho-Chi-Minh, leader of the Annamese resistance movement, was elected President by 97 per cent. of the people. The Viet-Nam Republic comprises Tonkin, Annam and Cochin-China, and it is both unlikely and undesirable that the French should regain this territory liberated by the Independence Movement whose strength was greatly increased during Japanese occupation. In Burma, the Anti-Fascist Freedom League, again composed of those who helped the Allies in defeating Japan, has now emerged with a strongly worded 100 per cent. independence programme. Recently the Freedom League was refused permission to send a delegation to London. This seems an unimaginative way of treating allies. The Chairman and Secretary have been told they may visit England, but only as private persons. This colonial approach towards the peoples of Asia is out of date.

Steel and the Ruhr

British second thoughts have led to disagreement in the Allied Control Council over the figure of Germany's future allowable steel production. At an earlier meeting, the Council had fixed Germany's future steel capacity at 7½ million tons a year, with a maximum for actual output of rather under 6 million tons. This compares with a pre-war output of 22 million tons, and with a pre-Nazi output (in 1929) of over 18 million. As against the Russian proposal to reduce the permitted output to 3 million tons, the figure agreed upon looks liberal; but the British representatives now argue that it was meant, in their view, to be an interim target, without prejudice to long-term policy. That clearly depends on what is to happen to the Ruhr. Is it to be part of the new Germany, or, as the French wish, detached from it, at any rate for purposes of economic operation and control? If there were to be a Ruhr industrial area under international control, operated as the servant of all Europe, it would be manifestly absurd to set limits to its production of a kind that would prevent it from performing the very service for which it had been set up. An output of less than 6 million tons for all Germany, including the Ruhr, obviously postulates a very big expansion of steel production in other European areas—notably Lorraine, which would in that case have to get its coal from the German coalfields. It also means the transference of large quantities of German steel-producing plant, as reparations, to the countries which are destined to supplant Germany in the supply of steel for the European market. Indeed, the necessity of fixing the reparations deliveries of plant is the main reason why Germany's permitted steel capacity is being settled now. It is, however, absurd to settle it in any conclusive way without first deciding the politico-economic future of the Ruhr. Is all hope of getting the Ruhr organised as an international service unit for European industrialisation to be given up?

The Tories and the Coal Bill

The Tories have decided to fight the Coal Bill, despite the Government's clear mandate for it. In order to make this decision plausible, they have to argue not against what the Bill says, but against what it omits. Their line will be that public ownership in itself can do nothing to raise output, and that the Bill ought to contain clear directions laying down what the new public management is to do in order to bring about this desirable result. This argument is, of course, nonsensical. It would be very bad policy to put into the Bill directives which could not help, and would probably hamper, the necessary work of technical reorganisation. Nor did the Tories themselves attempt anything of the sort when they set up the machinery for building the electricity grid. They established an instrument, and then left it to the technicians to work out the technical means of reaching the desired result. In the case of the coal mines, the Reid Report outlines the nature of the revolution in mining practice that needs to be brought about; but is it seriously suggested that the proposals of the Report ought to be incorporated in the Bill? A complaint against the Bill which might be raised with greater cogency on the other side of the House is that, though it establishes an Advisory Council representative of coal consumers, it places the Coal Board under no obligation to promote or make effective use of Joint Production Committees. This is a point on which the voices of miner M.P.s are likely to be heard.

Personnel of Local Government

Professor Laski's announcement that the Government is proposing to introduce some form of compensation to local councillors for loss of earnings coincides with the presentation of plans for reorganising the conditions of service of local government officials. Both reforms are badly needed. The greatest weakness of local government, on the elective side, is that in face of the growing volume of work falling on councillors, few except the retired, the wealthy or the official whose employing body is complacent can afford to stand; while the greatest weakness of the paid local government service is that it has no recognised common standards of recruitment, pay, or promotion, and fails to offer, save to a very few, attractive enough prospects to secure the right men in sufficient numbers. Payment for lost time will not by itself remove the first of these weaknesses; for a great many persons who would make good councillors will not be able to get leave from their employers for the necessary attendances even if the problem of payment is dealt with. It is often awkward for an employer to allow the time off; and, over and above this, political prejudice often enters in. There will have to be further safeguards if the basis for the supply of councillors is to be adequately widened. As for the officials, the standardisation of pay and conditions will not be easy in face of the wide differences in wealth between councils of the same nominal size and standing; and the Whitley Council, from which the new proposals emanate, is making only a tentative approach to unification, by laying down a number of scales and allowing each council to opt for the scale it deems appropriate to itself. Beyond this it may be impracticable to go until local finances have been further straightened out. It is, however, at least a very welcome, and long overdue, first step.

The New Development Areas

The Government's decision to recognise two new "development areas"—one in North Wales and the other in the St. Helens-Wigan area of Lancashire—is wise and timely. These are both areas, largely dependent in the past on coal-mining, in which the mines are rapidly becoming exhausted, so that they have either to go derelict or to turn to other branches of production. They are, moreover, both areas in which war factories have been set up; and in both the question now arises of converting these factories into "trading estates"—that is, into industrial estates where factories and power and other services can be rented by industrialists, and especially by industrialists without much capital who want to set up in a small or medium way in the first instance in the hope of expanding later. The area round Wrexham, apart from the gradual decline of its coalmines, was always badly short of openings for women; and the new developments there will have to be such as to carry on part of the wartime demand for female labour, as well as to provide jobs for men. In the scheduled area in Lancashire, on the other hand, though women's jobs will be needed, the predominant need will be for openings for male employment. The new developments are particularly welcome because they are the first indication of the Government's intention to use the new Development Act for dealing not only with great depressed regions, such as South Wales, but also with smaller "pockets" of depression, which may and do exist inside generally prosperous regions. This is undoubtedly the right way of using the Act; and it is to be hoped that it will be applied wherever the need for similar treatment exists.

PARLIAMENT: In Like a Lamb

Wednesday

For those who expected a rumbustious opening to the new Session, Tuesday's proceedings were disappointingly tame. No onslaughts, not even noteworthy jibes from the sparse Opposition benches, except that Anthony Eden congratulated Morrison on his safe return from his "excursion"; no fireworks from Ministers at question time, except that Shinwell answered the question: "Why did coal production fall in 1945?" with the truism, "Because we didn't get the output." The first days of the reassembled Parliament have been occupied, in the Chamber, with minor Amendments to Bills on the stocks, and outside the Chamber, with an intensive study of the Government's projected legislation.

A sequence of radical Bills, published or about to be published, will fully occupy the time of the House within the next few months, grudgingly yielding a day here and there for the discussion of tricky subjects like Indonesia and Palestine. The Mining Industry Nationalisation Bill will be followed by the Control of Capital Investment Bill; then the National Insurance Bill, the Bill to establish a National Health Service, and the Bill to abolish the Trades Disputes Act. The Opposition will subject these measures to a raking criticism which the Government and its back-benchers would do well not to underestimate. The capacity to make a strong recovery after a bad start is a British tradition in which the Conservative Party has a share. During the Recess, the Opposition has reorganised its fighting forces: Harold Macmillan, who is a Conservative theorist as well as a trusted man of the City and industry, will lead the attack amid the applause of the Conservative Associations. As Chairman of his Party's Fuel and Power Committee, he will be the principal Opposition speaker in the Nationalisation of the Mines Debate. His great dilemma will be to resist measures which bring popular benefits and at the same time to avoid the charge, to which the Conservative Party is so vulnerable, of being anti-popular.

In their opposition to the National Insurance Bill, the Conservatives must avoid the appearance of a Tories versus the People fight. So far, only the F.B.I. has, as of policy, charged the Government with social extravagance and called on it to reduce expenditure on Social Service. Will the Parliamentary familiars of the F.B.I. try to whittle down Jim Griffiths' Bill on the grounds that it gives too much? No one can imagine the Labour Government repeating the mean Geddes' cuts in benefits to children, pensioners and schools. The Opposition will have difficulty in offering even plausible arguments against the National Insurance Bill without appearing to attack the neediest section of the community.

The coming year is crucial for the Government. At question time, on Adjournment Motions and in debate, the Opposition—with Peter Thornycroft now installed near Hugh Molson on the back benches—will seek to discredit its intentions, to throw doubts on its efficiency and to inspire regret in the British nation that it voted for nationalisation and Social Security. To cope with such criticism the Government must be patient, hard-hitting but not overbearing in debate, persistent in its legislation, self-critical of its administration and undismayed by the malevolence which will rise in the Opposition as its feeling of frustration grows.

The Session which has begun like a lamb will roar like a lion before it is many Bills old.

Phineas Minor

THE PROSPECT FOR FRANCE

De Gaulle's last important administrative ction before retiring was to order the butchers o reopen their shops which they had closed in rotest against the low retail prices fixed by the Government. After the long-drawn recriminaions between the Parties and the refusal of Ministers to take responsibility for the shortages f meat and bread, the intervention of e Gaulle—a *deus ex machina* rushing to the escue by autorail from Antibes—was especially ratifying to Parisians. Had not the paternal General, the strong man who stood aloof from e snarlings of the small men, cut the involved not which the politicians had tied? The Chief f Government who had once said that "France eeds a government that will govern," seemed imself to be showing how to govern. That o doubt was the impression he meant to leave ehind him. He had done his job and could etire—to plant cabbages? Well, to wait perhaps, ntil his admirers, profiting by a chaotic situaon, again drag him reluctant back on to the olitical stage. M. Palewski's "irrevocable" ust have evoked many a cynical smile.

The Conseil des Ministres is left with a strange genda of widespread schemes for nationalisation d day-to-day problems of administration which e more difficult to solve than new laws are to troduce. Nearly eighteen months after Liberaon, the French Government has not yet asserted authority over the French people. The new efects and Mayors and Municipal Councillors e, it is true, at their posts; de Gaulle's Regional ommissioners are still available to carry out Chef du Gouvernement's orders. But the ic sense of France has not reawakened to give central authority support in its task of governnt. The Black Market is a form of mass civil obedience. Apart from the forgers of rationrds and Black Market gangsters who are the otleggers of the food-trade, there is hardly a asant, hardly a retailer who does not ignore intentions of the food regulations. When ryone else is looking after himself, then even usually patriotic citizen conforms to the eral Black Market pattern. When the Socialist nister Pineau took bread off the ration last vember, the consumption of loaves rose to unprecedented heights; the peasants were feeding them to their livestock. No wonder that, despite heavy grain imports from America, Tanguy-Prigent, the new and naturally unpopular Socialist Food Minister, has had to reimpose rationing, amid the jeers of the Paris workers who regard the original de-rationing, which took place just before the election, as a vote-catching manoeuvre.

The Communists, while criticising their Socialist colleagues for Ministerial ineptitude, are conscious of the inertia of the countryside—to put it no worse—and the non-co-operation of Big Business—to use a neutral expression—in carrying out the Government's food policy. François Billoux, Minister of National Economy, recently indicted almost the whole of the French insurance world (*presque la totalité de la profession*) for complicity in the Black Market by insuring illegal transfers of goods. With disobedience to law assuming nation-wide proportions, it is not difficult to see why the Socialist Food Ministers failed, why the Communists have been able to rally the discontented, who have suffered at the hands of the *affameurs*, and why any Government which hopes to solve France's food problems and win the confidence of the people must first impose its authority on the peasants and the business-men.

A first condition of respect for the Government is trust in the Government's financial policy. It is now clear that if Mendès France, who wanted a capital levy, taxation of war-profits and a moratorium, had had his way, the franc would have been a more reliable medium of exchange than it is to-day. The peasant would have been less inclined to hoard or to withhold his stock in the overstocked provinces; the worker and the civil servant would not have had to engage in the unremitting fight to make their wages catch up with prices; and the *rentier* would not have been ruined. But the orthodox Pléven, trained in the British Conservative school of business, won the day, and became Minister of Finance. De Gaulle, an intimate of Pléven, must bear the responsibility for rejecting the stabilising plans of Mendès France in favour of the present unhappy inflationary spiral.

Amid the material uncertainties of life, the political parties are getting into position for the Spring elections. The Socialists are short of money and deficient in local organisation. Whereas they have one paid organiser in each Department, the Communists have, on an average, seven. Communist newspapers flourish even in the provinces. The Socialists hint darkly that the Communists have ample funds from somewhere. Of the two parties, it is certain that the Communists are the better disciplined, more energetic and better able to provide satisfying slogans. Daniel Mayer, the Socialist Secretary, spoke of disarmament and collective security. To the Communists these are out-of-date catchwords. The Communist Minister Charles Tillon said at a meeting, "I'm the Minister of Armament, not of Disarmament." These are tones which rival those of de Gaulle when he speaks of *gloire*. They woo the patriotic Frenchman, as de Gaulle does, as Mayer cannot. The Communist discipline, its militancy and its link-up with the powerful Soviet Ally has great attractions for those who prefer the manly fraternalism of a Party to the paternalism of a Chef du Gouvernement. Among the Socialists, there are tens of thousands of *Communisants* who only need a crisis to throw in their lot with the Communists.

The rumours that de Gaulle intended to lead the MRP party were premature, but that the MRP would have liked him to become their leader and remain in power is certain. The Popular Republicans' supporters range politically from Christian Democrats like Bidault (who would not feel out of place in the Labour Party) to the whole rag-tag-and-bobtail of Vichyites, Giraudists and Cagoulards on the extreme right. Although the Party's leaders ostensibly accept the political programme of the National Council of Resistance, they have important reservations on many aspects of nationalisation, and have the support of the bourgeoisie and the wealthy peasants. The MRP is in favour of a Two-Chamber Constitution, with large executive powers for the President, as against the Communists and Socialists, who want a single Chamber with limited Presidential powers. Relics of non-democratic systems cling to the MRP scheme for a second Chamber; they want it to be a Professional Chamber, chosen by Trade Associations, Trade Unions, Ex-Servicemen's Leagues and so on. De Gaulle is their man, but they are not, as yet, his party.

Onlookers at the new regrouping of political forces are the Radicals, still smarting from their overwhelming defeat at the last election. Their "Petit Congrès" has just denounced the *incoherence gouvernementale* for which the Radicals accept no responsibility. Their Left Wing has triumphed in formulating a policy for the next election; nationalisation and collaboration with the *délégation des gauches*—with or without the Socialists—is now the programme. The Radicals look forward to winning up to fifty seats in March. Such a victory, if it were gained at the expense of MRP or the Socialists, would give them a balancing position between the Socialists and the Communists.

But it seems likely that the Socialists will lose heavily to the Communists unless they make an electoral agreement. In domestic affairs, their policies are similar, though the Communists are more energetic. In foreign affairs, the Socialists look Westwards; the Communists look Eastwards. But both want the Ruhr to be internationalised and France's security to be assured.

Between them, Communists and Socialists could govern France. The Socialists could forgive Thorez for his wartime retreat to Russia, and he could forget the Socialists who voted for Pétain in 1940. After all the Communists became the *parti des fusillés*, and the Socialists have Léon Blum. They would not find it hard to win over those French citizens who are tired of the political clamour, and who ask of their Government efficiency, irrespective of its politics. So far, they have only seen efficiency in the Ministries of the men who are technicians rather than politicians—men like Dautry, Minister of Reconstruction, or like René Mayer when he was Minister of Communications. Many of the Ministries are now to a great extent purged of Vichyites, some of whom were competent; they now lack experts who can advise inexperienced Ministers. The supreme task of a Chef du Gouvernement is to raise the level of technical efficiency among his Ministers and their staffs. Only then will he be able to have a Government that will govern.

Those who at the present crisis in France's life withdraw from politics in disdain or bitterness may find that the new men who apply themselves to government will profit from the year-old lesson. Food, financial stability and strength in administration are the most immediate objectives of France's needs. A good harvest, better transport and the need of the peasant to sell off his swollen hoards will mean food next summer. New taxes, efficiently collected, will mean more revenue, less spending power and greater faith in the franc. Someone will have to carry out these reforms. Who will it be? A new Government of determined men? It is on the cards that De Gaulle, if he waits, like Sulla, to rescue the stricken nation at an opportune moment, may find that she has meanwhile found other saviours.

STEPNEY, 1946

[Readers of the NEW STATESMAN AND NATION *may remember the series of effective articles that appeared in this journal describing Stepney during the Blitz in the autumn of 1940. Mr. Calder reviews Stepney after four and a half years.]*

MICKEY the Midget has turned the Crypt into a boy's club, with the Bengal Lancer's tomb earmarked as a library . . . Father John is running three parishes and kindling the torch of a new crusade on the colour problem. The canteen under the Arches, of which we were so proud, is a commercial workshop. The Tilbury Shelter, of lurid memory, is a respectable warehouse again. And Stepney, in spite of the reminder of its ruins, seems to have forgotten a lot of the redeeming lessons of the Blitz.

I never thought during those fearful nights that the time would come when I should feel a nostalgia for the Stepney of the Blitz. But I did when I read *Living in Stepney*,* the excellent report by the Toynbee Hall Reconstruction Group. I wondered whether those hopeful plans for the physical regeneration of Stepney could count on the community spirit which first glimmered like a marsh-gas above the morass of human misery, and then became the steady flame which illumined the darkest days. I went back over my old beat, and I am still wondering.

Stepney, that sump of humanity into which had drained successive streams of refugees, from the time of the Huguenots to the Nazi persecutions, was never a homogeneous community. People—200,000 of them at the outbreak of war—persisted there not from loyalty but from inertia, not from local patriotism but from necessity or for want of something better. And on to this target, this congestion of docks and warehouses and factories jostling overcrowded houses and tenements, this borough which housed a population equal to that of Plymouth in an area a fifth its size, rained Göring's bombs.

The effects were shocking. To death and destruction were added the consequences of official neglect, the miseries of the homeless and the squalor of the shelters. The exposures, mainly in the NEW STATESMAN AND NATION and *Daily Herald*, during the first weeks of the Blitz, provoked the Government to action. Changes were made in the Cabinet and in the Stepney administration. The worst abuses were remedied.

Order was brought to the chaos of the Tilbury, the biggest shelter which at its worst moments housed 14,000 people. Every colour and condition of people had crowded in there at the onset of the Blitz—white, black, brown and yellow, Jew, Gentile, Moslem and Hindu. Only part of it was an authorised shelter. The other half was still a railway siding and a food-store. But the crowds stormed in. They slept on the cinders between the tracks. They dossed on London's food supply. They stacked up cartons of margarine to make latrines. Harlots plied their trade. All that was changed. And an orderly community, pretty comfortably housed and cared for, emerged in time.

So, too, with the Fruit Exchange, where thousands packed into the basement, reducing it to what Mr. Malcolm MacDonald, then Minister of Health, insisted was the worst shelter in London. Mickey Davies, 3 feet 6 inches of irresistible well-doing, started cleaning up ahead of the authorities, and was so eminently successful that the shelterers voted him into the job of Chief Shelter Marshal. And again, out of obscene squalor emerged a well-run community, with its Shelter Committee, its clinic, its canteen, its Youth Club, Debating Society and Library.

And so with the Arches, under the high-level railway that runs through Father John Groser's parish. People crowded into them, although they were far from bomb-proof, but there, as in the big shelters, they *crowded* because they got their sense of security from numbers and not from structures. Father John did his best for them. He fought the authorities until the arches were reinforced. Until he won his canteen, he and his wife boiled cocoa in the vicarage kitchen and plucky helpers pushed the urns in perambulators and even bath-chairs through the bombardment to the arches-dwellers. And in the end he created a community.

It was the sort of community life which had barely existed in Stepney. The East End was really a series of "city villages." People's social lives were compassed by the neighbouring streets, or hived round the local pub; or maybe the church if it had a live parson like Father John; or the synagogue, or just the street market. There were, of course, the clubs and missions, excellent, progressive institutions, but touching only a fringe. And politics between elections were for the few and left very much to the caucus. For most of the people of Stepney their range of interests was strictly limited.

Under the Blitz that isolation was broken down, degradingly at first in that dam-burst of humanity which flooded the shelters, but encouragingly later on when the shelter-communities took shape. And for one brief spell, even creed and sectarianism disappeared in the communion of danger. In the big shelters reticences broke down. People learned to understand each other. They discovered new interests. They became active on shelter committees and in organising shelter affairs. They became articulate on social subjects on which they had never trusted themselves to speak before ("If Bill Smith or Moses Moisivich can speak up, why shouldn't I?") They became interested in play-readings, in lectures and in discussions. They became a shelter democracy. And they had enthusiasm.

What remains of all this in Stepney? I went to find out. The results were not very encouraging—not as encouraging as the constructive thinking and enlightened planning which has been done for the Stepney people by the Toynbee Group. Within a year of the end of the flying bombs, few vestiges of the shelter community spirit remain. The shelters themselves are closed, but no new community life has replaced them. There are about twenty youth clubs in the borough; some of them are flourishing, and if proper premises were available there would be no shortage of members. But that is the trouble: there are not the premises for proper club life. And since the first claim must be for the young people, the elders have no means of maintaining, if they want to, the associations and activities they built up in the shelters.

All that Mickey has managed to salvage out of his large shelter fraternity is a boys' club of seventy boys. He has hired the Crypt opposite the Fruit Exchange. When the authorities took it in hand they put in electric light, proper sanitation (and now Mickey has put in showers), locked away the sarcophagi, whitewashed the walls, including the funereal inscriptions, and provided canteen facilities. It is a bit cold and sparsely furnished with a ping-pong table and darts and an uncomfortable discussion room, where they were having a lecture on drama and elocution. The boys themselves run the canteen. Given proper equipment and the enthusiasm of Mickey, who (though he is married now with a daughter of two) devotes his evenings to the boys, the club should "make a go of it." But Mickey wishes he could salvage some of the activities of the older shelterers as well.

Father John was bemoaning the lack of premises, which is the fault of the Blitz and not of Stepney. He has got his youth clubs going in connection with his churches, but his burning concern at the moment is the colour problem, which could become really dangerous in Stepney. There always was a coloured community there, but there was not really any problem until the war. More coloured seamen came into the port and the coloured American troops drifted from the inhospitable West End to the dubious hospitality of the East End. There were no clubs for them, but there were cafés and accommodating prostitutes. They attracted more coloured people, and there has been something of an invasion which has caused resentment among East-Enders who were never colour-conscious before. Father John has been campaigning not only among the East-Enders, who listen to this militant churchman who has done so much for them, but in wider circles. For he could solve the problem, he says, if only he could get clubs and hostels.

I found from him that even the "city villages" have broken down. There were the evacuations which reduced the population from 200,000 t about 80,000. There was the destruction o whole streets and whole neighbourhoods, and there has been a shuffling of the tenants from one district to another. The result is that the old associations have gone.

If there was any wider community life to take its place that would not be regrettable. I simplifies some of the problems of the planners According to the London Plan, Stepney should have a population of 94,000, less than half what it was pre-war. The Stepney Borough Counci wants 134,000—60 per cent. to be lodged i houses and 40 per cent. in flats—the revers proportions of the London Plan. Either way there would be a tendency for older people t cling to their old narrow associations and for th younger people to go elswhere—to the new towns But that will be less true if the old association have changed. But the Group recognises th need for "neighbourhood planning," and stresse what was so manifest in the Blitz—that thes "neighbourhoods" do not conform to th borough boundaries but overlap into Bethn Green and Poplar.

The replanning of Stepney on more spaciou lines, the rehousing of Stepney and the banish ment of its slums, involve the movement industry. I gather that the opposition of th owners is less than would have been expecte although the biggest trade is the tailoring trad dependent largely on supplying the West En A lot of them had to move through bombing, a the idea of going to a new district is not as dras as it would have been.

Living in Stepney is an important experime in ideas as well as a vision of great possibilitie I should like to feel that behind it was the spi that was roused by the Blitz, that the people w discovered themselves then will crusade changes now. Maybe it is latent. Maybe t elections were significant—a Communist M. and ten Communist councillors; not, I am assure because there was a large-scale conversion Communism, but because people wanted n blood—a salutary reminder to the local Labo Party.

RITCHIE CALDER

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* *Pilot Press.* 3s. 6d.

A LONDON DIARY

Of the several names being considered for the succession to the Washington Embassy, that of Clark-Kerr, who is now elevated to the Peerage, is the most likely. I believe he would do very well there. Of all the diplomats whom I know, he is the most sensible and least tight-buttoned. Like other open-minded men in Moscow, he found it easy to get on well with Stalin, but suffered from the usual difficulties of achieving more than official contacts with other Soviet administrators. I fancy he found the isolation of the British Embassy an unhappy contrast with his house in Chungking, which was constantly peopled with Chinese visitors of all political persuasions. He was fortunate in being in China at a period when the regime was less strict than it is now. He is one of the few Englishmen who easily enters into the spirit of the awakening peoples of Asia; we never had an ambassador who did so well in the East. For that reason his present official visit to Indonesia is widely welcomed amongst Asiatics. The British Government is really doing its best to retire gracefully and honourably from the Indonesian scene. The obstacles are the Dutch Bourbons in Holland, who have done their best to embarrass and indeed get rid of Van Mook, and even more the Dutch planters in Indonesia itself, whose colonial views have not changed in the last century. It would be a tragedy affecting far more than Indonesia if the present proposals did not go through. The Sjahrir Government is moderate and competent; it effectively controls the country and wants peace with Holland. But there is of course a more revolutionary wing of Indonesian nationalism, and the object of the Dutch extremists is to split the Indonesian movement. Van Mook is a reasonable and progressive person and I take it that Clark-Kerr will stand by him in what must be a delicate and difficult business.

* * *

I talked the other day with a Labour M.P., whose case is typical of many. When he stood for Parliament, he gave up a well-paid post as technical expert. He now finds himself with £600 a year and no security for the future. He has been approached by business firms offering him jobs as "political adviser," but has refused, realising that acceptance would mean the forfeit of his independence. Clearly, M.P.'s salaries must be raised, because £600 a year with income-tax is not now enough to enable an M.P. to do his job properly. Some of the increase should take the form of an expense allowance. M.P.s now have hundreds of letters a week to deal with and must have secretaries. The *Economist* last week put forward a proposal to meet the difficulty which seems to me dangerous. In its anxiety to maintain "amateurs" in politics, it suggests that business firms should be under an obligation, if one of their employees goes into Parliament, to maintain his salary, as good employers did for men in the Services during the war, and to reinstate him if he loses his seat in Parliament. The financial risk, the *Economist* points out, would be small, and business firms could insure against it. My objection is that a much larger number of M.P.s would by this device be tied to the business concerns which had employed them, and the already excessive tendency to have groups of M.P.s with the function of defending the particular interests of shipping or coal or steel, or what-not, would be greatly increased. My friend, who resigned his job as a technician to become an M.P., took a conscious risk and ought not to be placed in the dilemma of seeming to be disloyal to his firm if he votes against the wishes and interests of his former employers. The chief rewards of the politician will always be the hope of power, the opportunity of championing a cause and the satisfaction of vanity. Everything should be done to decrease the financial incentive in politics, but the salary should be enough to enable a conscientious man to give his time to the job. An element of risk and, if he has been earning well, some loss of income, do no harm.

* * *

I quite understand why Transport House does not relish the prospect of members of the Labour Party putting money into the *Daily Worker*, thus enabling it to claim that it is not purely a Communist organ. But by circulating Labour M.P.s and organisations, warning them against subscribing to the "People's Press," it surely puts itself into a very difficult position. If the Labour Party is to start controlling investments of M.P.s, it can scarcely stop at this point. I should have said that an M.P.'s loyalty to Socialism was less threatened by ownership of shares in the *Daily Worker* than by investments in capitalist concerns. I fancy that investigation would show that quite a number of Labour M.P.s had substantial interest in maintaining the existing order of society, and in a crisis this source of revenue might prove an unconscious factor in their decisions. If M.P.s accept this fiat, they should press at the same time for an enquiry into other Labour investments. I should also have thought that the Labour Party would have welcomed the idea of the "People's Press," which will make readers and supporters of the paper into its owners. The Webbs, in their book outlining a new Constitution for the Socialist Commonwealth of this country, put forward this co-operative idea as the proper Socialist alternative to the capitalist press.

* * *

Documents from the Nazi archives in Berlin, released last week by the American Embassy in Buenos Aires, confirm the war-time charges of Nazi intrigue in Argentina. So far, only those records dealing with the Argentine press have been released. Among them are secret telegrams from the German Embassy to Berlin, covering the years 1942 and 1943. They explain how newsprint was secured for the pro-Nazi journals *El Pampero*, *Cabildo*, *El Pueblo* and others, and reveal that nearly seventy-five thousand reichsmarks a month were distributed in subsidies. Members of the staff of *Pampero* now publish *La Epoca*, Colonel Peron's propaganda organ. According to Mr. Cabot, American Chargé d'Affaires in Buenos Aires, *El Pueblo* was never placed on the Allied black-list because it was the principal organ of the Roman Catholic Church in Argentina, though the Nazis subsidised it to the tune of three thousand reichsmarks a month and sent it religious propaganda material through an agent called Cravacuore, now writing for *Democracia*, another of Peron's newspapers. The documents also show Nazi connections with *Andi*, a news agency used for a time by the Farrell dictatorship as its mouthpiece, and name the agents responsible for this work, many of whom are still active in Argentina. A correspondent describes elsewhere in this journal the brutal methods of Peron's police. There is a strong case for UNO to undo the mistake which it made at San Francisco when it accepted Argentina as an anti-Fascist nation.

* * *

Any newspaper that attains its hundredth birthday must be considered a National Institution. But the *News Chronicle* has made a special niche for itself in the life of the nation, and well deserves this week's chorus of congratulation. It was from the beginning a Radical paper, and it has ever since stood for the underdog and fought for good causes. The remark of the founder of another daily paper (half a century later) that the object of its promoters was "purely commercial," can never be applicable to a paper of which Dickens was, for a few weeks, the first editor. It had, that is to say, a strong and independent tradition half a century before the period of press commercialisation, and although it now competes for its place amongst the big four penny dailies with more than a million circulation, it still manages to find room for the serious expression of ideas as well as for the splash presentation of news. It was at its very best, I think, during the pre-war period when it was in the vanguard of the fight against Fascism in England and supporting the democratic cause in Spain. Oddly, both these issues were omitted from the record of the *News Chronicle's* past given by the B.B.C. on Sunday night. G.K.C., their star contributor for a dozen years, was also forgotten.

* * *

The *News Chronicle* dinner at the Dorchester on Monday night was a prodigious affair, such as I had not seen since pre-war days. If I had a complaint it was that the fanfare of trumpets let off, as you might say, just near the table where I was sitting, was alarming rather than agreeable. The only signs of the war were that a number of guests came in everyday clothes. Dressed in an old lounge suit, I found myself next to a Minister similarly clad, while a distinguished public figure not far off wore his C.H. inconspicuously with a lounge suit. There was a pronounced smell of moth balls amongst the guests as they handed their coats in at the cloakroom. The main difficulty in resurrecting one's dress suit is with the boiled shirt and collar, which, after being wrapped up in paper for the last six years, tends to have got a bit yellow at the edges. If we must have evening dress in future, why not stick to soft shirts and black ties? One M.P., in a burst of candour, said that his trousers had been mended where the moth had got at them, that he had borrowed his tail-coat, but that the white waistcoat was his own! Anyway, the photographs in the papers made us all look very nice.

* * *

A recent Brains Trust got a bit bogged, I thought, in answering a question about the "Eternal Verities." They agreed about the Good, the True and the Beautiful as the Ideal set before men, but, being in agreement, they did not quite know where to go from there. Their difficulty was that, not being Nazis, none of them was prepared to argue that there is no distinction between Good and Evil, that lies are preferable to Truth or that Beauty does not matter. The Editor of this journal trying, I gathered, to introduce a new note, said that he was doubtful about the word "eternal," since that implied ideals that did not change, as if they were dissociated from the human minds that cherished them. He received a crushing letter from a reader, who declared that he would no longer read a journal whose defects were explained by the fact that the Editor did not believe in the Eternal Verities!

Critic

THIS ENGLAND

A 5/- prize for the first entry in this column goes to P. M. Rowlatt.

Paste entries on postcard or slip of paper and give details of origin. Address to THIS ENGLAND, 10 Great Turnstile, W.C.1.

Imagine a less choleric and younger edition of Beethoven, and you have a fairly accurate picture of the brilliant young Scottish pianist and band leader, Billy Munn, whose band creates exactly the right atmosphere at the Orchid Room.—*Radio Times.*

He (Conrad Noel) was refused ordination by the Bishop of Exeter because of his alleged Popery and Pantheism.—Book review in *News Chronicle.*

Scotland Yard thoroughness is apparent in news from Miami that, for safety reasons, even the coconuts have been stripped from the trees under which Mr. Churchill may sit during his stay at his seaside holiday-home in Florida.—*Star*

Old Etonian (30) requires post as Aircraft Salesman (retail or firm's representative); reassuring appearance.—Advt. in *The Times.*

KURDISTAN

[By a Correspondent.]

In the medley of tensions and intrigues now unsettling the Middle East, there is one factor which is apt to be ignored, but of which more is likely to be heard—the nationalist aspirations of the Kurdish people. The revolt of the Iraki Kurds, last September, under Mulla Moustapha was abortive; and its leader fled to the Russian Zone of Iran, where a Kurdish Liberation Committee has been formed. Another Kurdish leader, Hamar Rachid, is watching events somewhere east of Kirkuk. And now it is reported from Baghdad that a Kurdish delegation has lodged with the Iraki Government demands for local self-government and the establishment of Kurdish schools. It may be surmised that this delegation has contacts with the National Liberation Committee in Iran.

The troubles of Kurdistan go far back into history. During the XVIth century, the Kurds, although vassals of the Sultan, lived very independently; for the Sultan counted on them to be a bulwark against the Persians. But this happy state could not last for ever; indeed, the Treaty of 1638, fixing the boundary between Turkey and Persia, was the signal for persecutions of Kurds from both sides. In the XVIIIth century, Turkey, weakened by disastrous wars in Europe, and Persia, by internal struggles, again gave Kurdistan a moment of respite. If they had been more united, the Kurds might even have been able to capture the imperial throne of Persia, but the chance was lost and never came again. Towards the end of the XVIIIth century, the Turks redoubled their efforts to eliminate the last vestiges of Kurdish autonomy. This policy provoked a series of violent revolts and led to the first serious attempts on the part of the Kurds to unify their country.

Various national leaders arose: first, Abderrahman Baba Pasha of Suleymaniyeh; later, Mohamed Pasha of Ravandouz; later still Beder Khan of Botan and Ismail Bey of Behdinan. But all the Kurdish uprisings were crushed, sometimes by the Ottomans, sometimes by the Persians, sometimes by both together. In 1880, however, a religious leader of Chemdine, Sheikh Obayd Ullah, undaunted by earlier failures, took up arms with the avowed intention of creating an independent Kurdistan. He succeeded in capturing Ourmia and Sawdj and even menaced Tabriz. But, once again, the concerted efforts of the Turks and of the Persians precipitated his downfall three years later, and he died in exile.

By the beginning of this century, all the great Kurdish principalities had disappeared. A few princely families continued to live on their domains, but had long since been stripped of their seigniorial prerogatives. The only Kurds who retained a semblance of power were local tribal chieftains over their own tribes. The influence of these local notables was even increased by the creation in 1885 of a semi-permanent Kurdish militia, in which they served as officers. One of them, a certain Ibrahim Pasha, commanding the Viranchehir militia, revolted in 1908, but was quickly suppressed.

World War I was particularly cruel for the Kurds. Many of them, drafted into the Ottoman Army, were killed in action or by disease. The civilian population, too, suffered greatly. In 1917, the Turkish Army decided, for "military reasons," to evacuate the population of the provinces of Diyar Bekir, Mouch and Bitlis. This operation was carried out in the middle of winter, and most of the evacuated died of cold and privation before it was completed. The advance of the Russians along the confines of Turkey and of Iran, too, left very painful memories.

With the end of the war, however, the Kurds, clinging to Wilsonian promises, looked forward to a new day—which never dawned. A Kurdish General, Charif Pasha, was accredited to the peace negotiations between the Allies and Turkey. The Treaty of Sèvres (1920) recognised the legitimacy of Kurdish aspirations, and provided for an independent Kurdistan; but, because of the Kemalist *coup de force*, they remained a dead letter. The Treaty of Sèvres was eventually superseded by the Treaty of Lausanne (1925), which simply obliged Turkey to grant full protection of life and liberty to all its inhabitants irrespective of birth, nationality, language, race or religion (Section III, Article 37). Kurdistan, partitioned between Turkey, Irak and Iran, moved dismally into the future, occasionally showing its exasperation and despair by revolts. But, for lack of unity and organisation, these revolts spent themselves futilely, usually calling down upon the Kurds the rigours of armed repression.

In Irak the Kurds were somewhat better protected than their brethren in Turkey. The British entrusted the administration of the region of Sulymanieh to a local religious leader, Sheikh Mahmoud, who played an important role until 1931. He revolted on several occasions and even founded, in 1923, an ephemeral Kurdish State. The Anglo-Iraki Treaty of 1930 provided for a relatively large measure of cultural and administrative autonomy for the Kurds. None the less, although not actually massacred, as were the Assyro-Chaldeans, the Kurds in Irak have been subjected to a policy of exception. They are not happy there.

In Iran, the Shah Pahlevi's policy of centralisation had the effect of entirely blotting out the Kurds' local autonomy. Whole tribes were deported; tribal chieftains were exiled or else made themselves as inconspicuous as possible. Only in 1941, with the change of regime, did the Kurds regain a few shreds of their lost independence.

In the U.S.S.R., on the other hand, the Kurds were given very wide privileges. For a while they constituted a separate republic in the Nakhkitchevan, but later were incorporated, without prejudice to their administrative and cultural autonomy, into Soviet Armenia. Erivan has become one of the most important Kurdish intellectual centres; in particular, many Kurdish publications and periodicals using the Roman alphabet are printed there each year. Kurdish leaders (in particular, the Syrian Emir, Dr. Kamuran Aali Bedir Khan) protest that the Kurds are not pro-Russian. But who could blame them for accepting help from the only Power that proffers it?

HOW PERON RULES

(This first-hand account of the methods of the military dictatorship has been sent us by an Argentine university teacher who, for obvious reasons, must remain anonymous.)

The military putsch of June, 1943, was genuinely welcomed by most people in Argentina. They were glad to see the overthrow of a reactionary oligarchy which had been openly friendly towards the Axis Powers and had humiliated the people by its cynical repudiation of treaties and by its repressive measures. But it soon appeared that the revolutionary Government was not democratic, but Fascist and despotic. Its first blow was an attack on the universities. A number of "interventors" were installed under the pretence of investigating Communist activities. Many of the ablest professors were dismissed for signing a proclamation urging the Government to implement the democratic principles it affirmed and to honour its international commitments.

After some time, when it was obvious that the Axis Powers could not win the war, another putsch was organised; the original leaders of the revolution were replaced by the Farrell-Peron partnership. Peron, determined to become President, but wishing to give an appearance of legality to his promotion, set about oiling the electoral machine, simultaneously importing the Nazi technique of terrorising opponents.

At the beginning of 1945 certain concessions were made to calm the growing suspicion in foreign countries and to suggest that Argentina had a democratic administration which sympathised with the United Nations. Among other things, the universities were freed from strict supervision and a great fuss was made about their cultural autonomy and democratic rights. Peron thought that he had taught the recalcitrants a lesson and that they would now be more careful. But after the dismissed professors had been reinstated, they united with the students in demanding that the administration should abdicate its authority to the Supreme Court, which should then order immediate free elections.

The next move was the great "Liberty" demonstration, in which hundreds of thousands marched through the streets of Buenos Aires demanding an end to the military dictatorship. This popular opposition infuriated Peron. Saying that he had frustrated a military conspiracy, he proclaimed a state of siege and arrested hundreds of leading citizens for no other reason than that they had taken part in the demonstration. Among those arrested were the Rectors and Deans of the universities. After being detained for several days without being charged or interrogated, most of the prisoners were released. In Córdoba, the Federal judge issued a writ of *Habeas Corpus* to protect the Rector and other members of the University—the instructions for their arrest being out of order—and the prisoners were set free. Later they were re-arrested, together with the judge, who was dismissed from his position. A friend gave me a moving account of his arrival at the main penitentiary in Buenos Aires, where he was welcomed by six Rectors and ten Deans.

Peron's new attempt to subdue the universities did not end at this. The police were ordered to take over the buildings. Determined to put up at least a token resistance, the students barricaded themselves in all the university buildings throughout the country. At one university the professors and students were completely united and shared the siege together. On the night when the police attacked the medical school, the professors who were not on watch were called by telephone and were thus able to reach the building before the police assault began. The police arrived in force, several hundred strong, bringing with them a tear-gas detachment, armoured cars and the fire-brigade. Forcing a side-door, they found the main lecture hall full of students and professors. The Dean stepped forward and said that they yielded to force but they registered their protest at this raid. After singing the National Anthem all present were arrested.

It is worth noting that persons who are merely "detained" here have to provide their own food and bedding. The town rose nobly to the occasion, and by evening a collecting centre for food, blankets and mattresses had received enough gifts to meet the needs of more than fifty professors and a thousand students, including many girls. The Chief of Police informed the Minister of the Interior that he could not be responsible for maintaining order in the town if so many prominent citizens and students were kept in jail without reason. After two days—during which all the shops had closed in protest—the prisoners were released. The police behaved decently and there were no unpleasant incidents.

Unfortunately it was not the same elsewhere. The police, imitating the Gestapo, fired on the barricaded buildings and brutally assaulted the students. Girls were indecently insulted and man-handled: in La Plata two had their spines broken with beatings. Saying that the university buildings were used for immoral purposes, the police chief in La Plata had girls taken to the prostitutes prison in Buenos Aires, the normal inmates having been released to make room for the students. Meanwhile, professors and students alike were beaten up in true Nazi style. Conditions in the jails were shocking. Four hundred boys were kept for five days in a room where a hundred would have been cramped. The majority were unable either to lie down or sit and few had mattresses or bedding.

Public indignation grew. Another military putsch overthrew Peron, but the celebrations were premature. Using the large funds he had diverted from the public revenue, Peron was able to use his paid agents to organise a general strike of sorts. They terrorised large sections of the working class with the full connivance of the police. They swarmed through the streets with knives and sticks yelling for the students to come out and fight them. They sacked the houses of university professors and scribbled insulting slogans—many anti-Semitic—on public buildings. One slogan was " Be patriotic : kill a student." At the same time they were crying " Down with culture." This is all due to Peron's clever and systematic propaganda. He has bought part of the working class by some demagogic social reforms and, realising that educated people can see through this at once, has egged on his followers to attack " culture." Students always supported the workers in their demands for social justice. They still do. The organised workers, whose trade-unions were destroyed by Peron and replaced by official substitutes, understand the danger.

The democratic countries should not look upon this peril with indifference. This country is in the hands of a military despotism with Nazi ideals, which understands neither culture nor economics. A vain demagogue is bribing and beating his way into the office of President, using the public funds, the police, the press and the radio as his tools. There is no hope that the coming elections will be fair. The world will soon see the tragic spectacle of another " legal " Fascist regime, crushing its own people and preparing for aggressive war against its neighbours.

BIRTH OF A NATION

The Kingdom of Transjordan will be sovereign and free,
For Abdulla ibn Husein was a model Mandatee.
Salute to Transjordania, no more in leading strings,
As this Asia Minor Emir joins the minor Mespot Kings.
One Mandate bud has blossomed,
One Mandate bursts in flower,
The rest remain embosomed
In the Mandatory Power.
For Palestine a warder,
For Togoland a warden,
But we're trusting lawandorder
To Abdulla of Transjordan.

The Togo aborigines are being gently trained,
Their urge towards self-government must be awhile restrained,
The Cameroons for full self-rule are not yet nearly ripe,
Nor undeveloped squatters of the Tanganyika type.
The Pasha and the Mullah
Ejaculate " Eureka ! "
But they're sore about Abdulla
In Arusha, Tanganyika.
Still under superintendence,
Their outlook they must broaden
Till fit for independence,
Like Abdulla of Transjordan.

While Britain slowly educates the backward Cameroons
Abdulla rules his nomads on Transjordan's sovereign dunes,
And such enlightened policies Abdulla's reign adorn,
The Mandate is relinquished that a nation may be born !
" Unfair " say Wahis planting
In East African plantations,
" Unfair " say Ewes chanting
In their Gold Coast Reservations.
But advance must be impressive,
And Great Britain must stand warden,
Till all Mandates are progressive
As the Kingdom of Transjordan.

SAGITTARIUS

"CASE BARBAROSSA."—III

BY March 1st, 1941, Gen. Thomas has completed his plans for the activities of the War Economy Department in conjunction with "Barbarossa," and acquaints his section chiefs with the Russian operation. The main mission of their organisation is stated to be "the seizing of raw materials and taking over of all important concerns." May 15th, 1941, had been set as a tentative date for the attack. In all probability it was meant to be the definite date. A note in the documents states that "the extension of operations in Yugoslavia delayed 'Barbarossa' for about five weeks." Curiously, on April 24th, the naval attaché in Moscow quotes the British Ambassador in Moscow as predicting June 22nd as the day. Whatever be the explanation, the time-table for "Barbarossa," which gives the correct and final date, was issued on June 1st, 1941, and negotiations with the Finnish General Staff (which were to be left until the very last moment) began, according to the same document, on May 25th. It is quite possible, of course, that the postponement was decided on or around April 24th, and that the British Embassy in Moscow received notice of it almost immediately. We know from Mr. Churchill that some time in the spring the British warned Stalin of the coming attack.

Stalin meanwhile had continued to keep his temper. On April 6th it is recorded that "the position of Russia at the moment is one of quietness and waiting. Apparently Russia has firmly decided on neutrality toward Germany. . . . An increasing coolness, however, is unmistakable."

On April 29th, 1941, a conference is held in Gen. Thomas's office with all branches of the Armed Forces. It is announced that for the purposes of "Barbarossa" a new and entirely separate economic general staff has been formed which bears the code-name "Economic Staff Oldenburg," and is under the command of Maj. Gen. Schubert. The area of its operation is to be divided up into five economic inspectorates, 23 economic commands and 12 sub-offices at the most important places within the areas of the economic commands. Gen. Thomas explains that the "Economic Staff Oldenburg" will deal not only with military industry but comprises the entire economic field in Russia.

The stage is almost set. On May 2nd, "Economic Staff Oldenburg" sends a memorandum to Maj. Gen. Schubert on the "result of to-day's discussion with the State Secretaries regarding 'Barbarossa,'" which opens with the sentence: "The war can only be continued if all armed forces are fed by Russia in the third year of war. There is no doubt that many millions of people will starve to death in Russia if we take out of the country the things necessary for us." Having made this clear, the memorandum continues:—

> The seizure and transfer of oil seeds and oil cakes are most important, grain is only secondary. The armed forces will probably consume the fat and meat which are on hand. Only those branches of industry are allowed to resume work which are engaged in fields of shortages, for instance, factories manufacturing transport vehicles, textile works and such armament factories in whose fields a shortage exists in Germany.

On May 22nd, 1941, the day on which "the time-table for the maximum concentration of troops in the East was put into operation," Raeder has a conference with Hitler, and informs him that all preparations for the holding back of war materials consigned to Russia have been made. "In the near future it will be explained to the Russian Navy that, because of our own need, there may be slight delays in deliveries, without endangering the whole." Hitler agrees. A week later preparatory warship movements for "Barbarossa" begin.

On June 1st, 1941, the time-table for "Barbarossa" is issued. It opens with a survey of the "state of preparations as of June 1st, 1941."

> In the West altogether 42 divisions have been left plus one armoured brigade. Operations "Attila" (seizure of French North Africa) and "Isabella" (prevention of a British coup in Portugal) can still be executed at 10 days' warning, but not simultaneously. Air Fleet II has been withdrawn from action and transferred to the East, while Air Fleet III has taken over sole command in the conduct of air warfare against Britain. The "Second Phase of Deception of the Enemy" is in operation under the code-names "Shark" and "Harpoon," with the aim of giving the impression that landings are being prepared from Norway, the Channel Coast and Brittany. Troop Concentration "East" will be represented as a deception exercise for the landing in England.

On June 15th the Rumanians are to be informed of the final "Barbarossa" decisions. On June 16th a hint is to be given to the Hungarians to reinforce their safeguards on the border against Soviet Russia. On June 17th and 18th all schools in the Eastern area are to be closed. German merchant shipping is to withdraw inconspicuously from Soviet ports. Further outward sailings to Soviet ports are to be suspended. Aerial reconnaissance of the Baltic begins. From June 18th "the intention to attack need no longer be camouflaged." June 21st, 13.00 hours, is given as the latest time at which the operation can still be cancelled. The code-word for cancellation is "Altona," for the start of the attack "Dortmund." For the night from June 21st to 22nd it is ordered that "in the event of an encounter with the enemy the use of arms is authorised." H-Hour for the the Army invasion and crossing of the frontier by the Air Force is June 22nd, 03.30 hours.

What conclusions can be drawn from this very condensed summary of events? Once more it must be emphasised that this is only half the story—the Nazi half. A full and objective view of this crucial period of European affairs can only be gained after the Soviet Union has contributed her own version which, no doubt, will amplify and correct much that remains obscure in the German story. Moreover, it must be remembered that only part of the German documentary evidence now in Allied hands was available for this survey—that part which was released at Nuremberg for the purposes of the Allied prosecution. The remainder must await official publication.

Nevertheless, certain points stand out clearly from the story as told by the Nazi documents. The Munich conference appears as the true turning point. Having been excluded from it, the Soviet Union decided that she could not assume joint responsibility for the consequences arising from a situation upon which she had been denied influence; she concluded that she could not rely on concerted action with the Western democracies in case of an armed conflict with Germany. Driven into political isolation, Stalin apparently decided that, in self-protection, the U.S.S.R. must sup with the devil, but use the longest possible spoon. For Hitler, who had always intended to drive East, it was a question of deciding at what stage of the war he should tackle the Soviet Union, before or after the invasion of Britain. We now see that the final decision to abandon the invasion plan in favour of an attack in the East was made immediately after Molotov's visit to Berlin in November, 1940, though tentative preparations were begun several months earlier.

Hitler's purpose in concluding the Pact with Russia was to keep his rear free while dealing with the West, and to obtain at the same time those foodstuffs and raw materials which were essential for his conduct of the war, and which he was bent on getting from the East in any case —even by force of arms. He was ready to do this at the price of building up and steadily strengthening the Red Army through delivery of German war material, at one point even to the detriment of his own forces, but he was apparently convinced that, even so, he would win this "race with himself." For Stalin, who seems to have had few doubts about Hitler's ultimate intentions, it was a question of buying time and arms at the price of assisting his eventual enemy with precious raw materials which he had to deny to his own people. Thus the vicious circle rounded itself.

PETER DE MENDELSSOHN

JIVE AND LET JIVE

When the cliché-encrusted old ladies of the gossip columns refer to this as the age of jive and juvenile sin, they will get no help from the experts in the business; or from me. For I report only what I see, and don't believe all of that.

There are 261 places in London licensed for dancing by the L.C.C., and, in the interests of research and history, I have been to a cross-section of them. It has proved to be a healthful holiday. Nobody wanted me to dance and there was no possibility of anybody asking me to drink. I was stared at as an intruder, suspected as a non-dancer, and patronised as a being with little knowledge of the important things of life. Particularly by Phyllis.

Phyllis is 20, lives in Finchley, North London, and works in a laundry. She is buxom, red faced, and pleasant to talk to. She makes £3 a week, lives with her parents, and has only one interest in life. She goes to the Paramount Dance Hall, in Tottenham Court Road, nine times weekly. This costs her £1 2*s.* 6*d.* a week. She goes every night, for there is a Sunday Club for which she pays a shilling for a six-months' membership, and she goes there for the tea dance on Wednesdays and Saturdays. She dances the whole time, and that is 33 hours a week.

She jives. She holds her partner more or less at arm's-length, and they both twirl and kick their legs in the air, sideways and without much mutual timing. Her skirt rises far above her knees and she displays a neat pair of knickers and an athletic behind. Everybody else in the Paramount does the same. They also did it on tennis courts, and when playing hockey. But Phyllis has never played hockey. She has never been on a bicycle trip, because there haven't been any bicycles, and she has never seen a tennis court. But she has jived. This is the only thing Phyllis has done, and she is certainly giving her mind to it. I asked her what she would do if the dance halls were closed and she said: "We would go and jive in the last hall, and when that closed, we would jive in the streets. You can't stop jiving once you start." But she did stop once, and that was to gaze at a singer at the microphone, a quite masculine young man, who sang something with the line, "The Secret Way you Hold my Hand." The only way Phyllis would hold your hand would be a half-nelson. She is a gymnast and an athlete. She has to be, on 33 hours of this a week.

I believe the dance-hall manager who said to me: "There's less than five per cent. sex in this kind of dancing. God help us, it was the managers who encouraged jive, and now they're paying for it, for in a dance hall you have to get people moving round the floor steadily. These kids get rid of their sex from 7 to 11 every night. Look round the floor and you won't see a couple locked in one of those clutches. They can't dance, and it isn't dancing, but look at their faces and you'll see they're enjoying themselves. They don't drink, they don't eat, they don't keep making up their faces, and they dance with a different boy most dances. If they see one that can *dance*, he's had it. They're tough, and there's no man who can come in here for reasons other than dances and get away with it."

Mr. Albert Goodall, who was a professional dancer and now manages the Lyceum, a Mecca dance hall with the floor built on Morrison shelters, told me the seven poises of good dancing, none of which, he admitted sorrowfully, could be seen except accidentally on the splendid floor of London's latest jive gymnasium. I looked down on the floor from the old dress circle, where we were eating fish and chips and drinking tea, on to a technicolour swirl of red dresses, sailors' uniforms, battledress. The floor runs right back on to the stage and into the wings, past the pillars where the flies used to be. There were girls and soldiers in the boxes, and girls and soldiers in the gallery, but most of them on the floor. They looked like the coloured cover of a *Saturday Evening Post*, and the seven points of poise had gone to hell. But they were enjoying themselves. Mr. Goodall doesn't allow jitterbugging, and said that the difference is that in jive you keep your feet on the floor a little more. There are fourteen cloak-room attendants in the Lyceum, and in charge is an ex-professional dancer who said: "Dancing is certainly at the cross roads." But when I asked what this meant she went on with her work.

At the Paramount, in Tottenham Court Road, there is a surplus of women. There are a great many Negroes, because jitterbugging is allowed and the Americans are billeted near there. There is no colour bar. Mr. William Logan, of Alloa, Scotland, is the man seeing that everything goes all right. He doesn't know the tunes they play, but knows some of the faces of the regulars, who congregate in a corner of the hall. "It's just like a club for them," he says. "And there's no sex in it." There are some chequered suits at the Paramount, and a zoot suit or two have been seen, with a wide tie and a loose collar. But I don't think Phyllis or Mr. Logan would stand for that line for long. The Paramount is just one of the sixteen Mecca dance halls which attract a hundred thousand boys and girls, average age 22, paying their £10,000 a week in half-crowns.

Whereas many of the jive girls sit out the infrequent waltzes, and the Americans and Canadians, I was told, can't do them at all, at the "Pride of Erin" Club, which used to be the Rector's, Mr. Jimmy Muldoon told me that Irish jigs and reels are popular. The ladies carry their shoes to the "Pride of Erin" on dirty nights, and the end of a dance is announced by the M.C. who shouts, "You've had it." There is a somewhat vivid backcloth which is probably Ireland in the finest weather, and jitterbugging is taboo. I asked about trouble, and Mr. Muldoon said: "We don't have any. Ever. But we have four doormen."

The jaws champing on chewing gum, the swirling skirts, the wide-flung arms and the restless legs of young London from 7 to 11 p.m. will not, probably, inspire any painter of the age who is not, at heart, embittered at humanity. They are not Landseer subjects; they are not pretty, like young foals at play. In fact, they sweat. They sweat unashamedly and seldom powder or use rouge. It is all a most unromp-worthy proceeding. A man who was so realistic about life in general that he declined to give his name, told me he thought there was 50 per cent. sex in the attraction of jive, 15 per cent. depended on the lights and attractions, 20 per cent. on lack of anything else to do, and 15 per cent. on youthful energy and wanting to get away from home. I rose at once to defend the honour of Phyllis and the others, and he explained that his idea of sex was different from mine. All he meant, he said, was the natural desire of the soldier to get his arm round a girl—any girl—and to get away from the conversation of the barrack-room lawyers. We compromised on that. He also said that the dance boom would last two years more. Finally, he said, more obscurely: "You don't jive in a brothel. And you don't have bright lights. And never forget there's one law for the rich and one for the poor, and only the working man and his girl can dance decently." I did not ask for his definition of decency.

At the Palais de Danse, Hammersmith, Mr. J. Dillworth, the manager, told me that blood tests had shown that more energy was expended in the old reels than in the new jives. He regards the dance boom as almost entirely escapist, and agrees that when the shops are full of bicycles and skates, the dance halls will be less full of dancers. We looked over the biggest hall in Britain, on to a huge floor that used to cover a tramway shelter. "No, they can't dance," said Mr. Dillworth sadly, "but they do enjoy themselves, and half a million of them sent in votes in the dance tune competition run by the Palais." He has noted one feature of all crowds in a ballroom. They all congregate at the exit end of the floor in the intervals. Never the other end. Psycho-analysts kindly annotate.

To-night and to-morrow night and twice on Wednesday, Phyllis and some 20,000 others will be kicking their legs in London. There will be 30,000 doing the same in Glasgow, where there are more dance halls for a smaller population. Phyllis will be 22 when the dance boom ends and halls close down and the jivers go hiking.

Roland Wild

ATONALISTS AND OTHERS

Mr. Edward Clark, in his series of small orchestral concerts at the Wigmore Hall, seems bent on proving that all that glittered in the nineteen-twenties was not pinchbeck. It is certainly good for our critical ears to encounter again the "latest novelties" of twenty years ago: Prokofiev, not yet abashed by his responsibilities as a Soviet citizen; Lambert and Milhaud vividly recalling the rhythms of the Florence Mills epoch. One sees how valuable a part all this fresh air played in dispelling the post-Brahmsian, post-Wagnerian fug; at the same time, the actual musical invention displayed in some of these works is hardly enough to keep them from going stale in their turn.

A totally different note was sounded by the Adagio from Alban Berg's *Kammerkonzert for Piano, Violin and* 13 *Wind Instruments*. It was tantalising of Mr. Clark not to have given us the whole of this piece, since the movement which he did play provided by far the deepest enjoyment of the evening: it was indeed quite extraordinarily moving. Hearing Berg's music, I am almost always conscious of the presence of a master; and this in spite of the extreme and obvious difficulty of "following" his musical thought. It may be that my good fortune in hearing several fine performances of *Wozzeck* at Vienna in 1930 gave me at least some emotional insight into the strange imaginative world inhabited by this artist. But powerful as I find the impression of his music to be, I am often suspicious of my own reactions; for is not this music almost wholly atonal? and what can there be in strict atonalism to take the place of the perpetual onward harmonic and thematic "pull" which keeps our interest alive in ordinary music? Of course, the experts point out that, so far from being formless, "twelve-tone music" is almost more elaborately organised than any other sort. I know; but its organisation is not such as can be evident to one in a thousand listeners. For example, the programme-note pointed out that, after the climax of the Berg *Adagio*, "the note D flat is heard twelve times on the double bassoon, after which the music runs, bar for bar, backwards . . ." Well, I spotted the twelve D flats—that was easy; but I should like to meet the man who could have told me, *without reading the programme*, that what we were now hearing was the former material "in reverse." To all but an inconceivably small minority, the formal devices of atonalism exist only on paper; the mystery is that the result should be capable, at times, of stirring our musical emotions so profoundly. In the case of Berg, much of the pleasure we feel derives from the extraordinary fineness of his ear, which led him to "place" the component parts of his patterns with the almost Chinese delicacy shown in another medium by Paul Klee. But it is also true, I think, that some of Berg's most emotional effects are obtained by throwing atonal theory overboard and making use of an harmonic feeling which is not atonal at all, but a subtle derivative and extension of Wagner: a debt which he seems to acknowledge in that curious quotation from *Tristan* in the middle of the *Lyrische Suite*.

Elisabeth Lutyens, in the *Bassoon Concerto* which received its first performance at the same concert, also writes in the atonal idiom, and also shows a considerable delicacy of ear. The Concerto is brief, and most effectively written for the bassoon; the last movement is even amusing, but seemed to me to owe that quality to a certain infusion of tonal feeling.

On Sunday, the first of a welcome series of Anglo-Dutch concerts (to be given at irregular intervals, mostly at the National Gallery or the Wigmore Hall) brought to London the Amsterdam String Quartet, who played Michael Tippett's fine *Second Quartet* with remarkable understanding and a lovely silken tone. They also introduced us to two Dutch quartets. One of these, Willem Pijper's No. 4, relied too exclusively on harmonic interest to hold the attention through four movements; but the *Second Quartet* of Robert de Roos was an impressive work, vigorous in part-writing, and agreeably concise in form. I should like to hear more of this composer, who was born in 1906. The English part of the concert was completed by an early Britten song cycle to Auden's words, *On This Island*, which has many of the characteristics of his style which we have grown to admire in his later works, and is still extremely enjoyable when sung so well as it was on this occasion by Peter Pears.

Desmond Shawe-Taylor

RADIO NOTES

The listener's licence is to be increased to £1. In my view this course was the best of the three obvious possibilities, the other two being (1) to ask the Government to continue its wartime subsidy, (2) to open the way for commercial networks, on the American model. The Government subsidy was a purely *ad hoc* measure, designed to cover the enormous expense of overseas broadcasting which was essential to the war effort. Like individuals, collectivities greatly dislike paying for things which they do not in fact control, and much of the abuse—some of it justified, but some merely ill-informed—which Members of Parliament showered upon the B.B.C. during the war years was to some extent due to their knowledge that the Government was footing the bill while possessing only indirect control over the policy of the Corporation. Now the licence-holders should feel that it is they to whom the B.B.C. is directly responsible. Hasty persons will no doubt set up a squawk at the mere idea of the double fee; but if they would spend a few minutes totting up the average sum they disburse yearly in theatre and cinema tickets, could they honestly aver that £1 per year was excessive payment for a varied entertainment lasting 17½ hours on 365 days in the year? There must be very few families who cannot afford to spend a good deal more than £1 a year on entertainment. But I trust that at any rate the greater part of the increased income will be devoted to improving the home services, and not used to pay for overseas broadcasts. Otherwise the increased cost of the licence becomes a tax in disguise.

The cases for and against commercial broadcasting are complicated, for over and above the varying results obvious in the States and elsewhere, there is the fact that until something of the kind has been attempted here we cannot tell how it would work out, since the climate of the British temperament is apt to have unforeseeable effects on imported ideas and methods. In this connection a really thoroughgoing survey of the consequences of commercial broadcasting in the Dominions might be of some use in estimating the probability of its success in these islands. One disadvantage leaps to the eyes: the supply of talent of all kinds over here is for various reasons too low just at present to admit of dilution. As in the case of orchestras, opera companies and ballets, existing resources must be pooled if the standard of radio is to be—not merely maintained at its present level—but raised to what it was before the war. Companies which laminate into competing sections, as the Russian ballet did in the late Thirties, do a signal disservice to the community. United, they stand; divided, they must, sooner or later, fall.

Saturday Night Theatre. Excellent as these productions often are, and difficult though it must be to keep the series going throughout the year, I cannot help thinking that Drama should always be able to find something less preposterous than the machine-made claptrap broadcast on January 19th. Frederick Lonsdale is a playwright more apt for humorous melodrama than for subtle character drawing; but if he ever wrote a play sillier than *The High Road* I should be interested to hear of it. Even had it been presented as a picture of High Life in 1900, this piece would have seemed a stupid enough burlesque; but there was no indication in the production that it was intended as other than a satire on the contemporary situation, upon which it has about as much bearing as Mr. Rochester's week-end party in *Jane Eyre*.

Recommendations.—*January 27th.* Music Magazine (Mozart, 11 a.m.); Concert (Martinu and Janacek, 2.30 p.m.); The Man Who Pulled Strings (Schnitzler, 4 p.m.); The World Goes By (Mrs. Roosevelt, 4.30 p.m.); Has India Changed? (E. M. Forster, 9.15 p.m.).

January 28th. Russian Music (6.45 p.m.); The Way to the Stars (9.15 p.m.); Chamber Music (11.25 p.m.).

January 29th. Northern Orchestra (Clifford Curzon, 7.30 p.m.).

January 30th. Busoni Violin Sonata (1.15 p.m.); Tosca (7.20 p.m.).

January 31st. Recital (Kathleen Long (L.P. 12 noon); Uncle Arthur (9.30 p.m.).

February 1st. This Modern Art (7.30 p.m.); The Old Order Changes (9.30 p.m.); Brahms Alto Rhapsody (11.45 p.m.).

February 2nd. Symphony Orchestra (2.15 p.m.) Week in Westminster (W. Gallacher, M.P., 7.45 p.m.)

Edward Sackville West

Correspondence

SARAWAK

Sir,—Mr. Skinnard's sensitive reaction to Prof. Le Gros Clark's article on Sarawak comes as a welcome sign that there exists in some quarters an uneasy feeling that the Colonial Office plans for Sarawak need justifying.

It is no reflection on Mr. Skinnard that he has never visited Sarawak and that the references he has consulted are both out of date and inaccurate. It is true that Sarawak possesses few roads in relation to the size of the country, but are these the only yardstick of welfare? Is there not a lesson to be learnt from Java? Waterways abound in Sarawak and are the natural highways of the State. Indeed, the Natives use them for choice, when roads are available for the same routes and to use them would be quicker. As for the opium question, I merely state the fact that no country has better fulfilled its obligations under the Geneva Convention affecting this product, and a complete and effective system of registration was introduced from the start.

It is a pity Mr. Skinnard failed to note that in the Constitution Order of 1941, to which he has most carefully referred, a member of the Sarawak Civil Service includes "any person of whatsoever race who is employed by the Sarawak Government upon duty within the State," and this merely defines what has always been the position of persons employed by the Sarawak Government. The "White" element in the Sarawak Government is regarded by the people of Sarawak essentially as a British leavening in their own Native administration. Since 1841 they have been a free people, with their own form of government, and King George V gracefully summed up the unique position in 1917, when he described the late Rajah as "a loyal subject of my own and the distinguished ruler of a friendly State."

I shall not deny that there may be faults in the Constitution, which was framed with the uninvited advice and assistance of the Colonial Office; but I contend that it is less subject to criticism than the constitutions of any of the colonial territories. It is true that the preamble refers to it as "terminating for ever the Era of Autocratic Rule," but the Rajahs of the past have always recognised their moral obligation to act with the advice of a Native council and it is now specifically laid down in black and white that the Rajah can act only with the advice and consent of a Supreme Council, directly responsible to a State Council, which contains a Native majority, which is vested with the full legislative power. This Constitution is the Law of Sarawak, and any failings it may have can be righted constitutionally within the State. To attempt to discredit or destroy the Constitution with a view to knocking down the "autocrat" thus established, would be to reduce, for purely political purposes, a highly serious matter to slapstick comedy. And this is no question of party politics: the policy is a Departmental one, initiated under the Coalition Government.

It is an almost irresistible temptation to draw comparisons with conditions in the colonial dependencies, to answer Mr. Skinnard's charge of "exploitation" in Sarawak; but I shall confine myself to the statement that the people of Sarawak themselves own and cultivate over 96 per cent. of the 300,000 acres of rubber grown in the State, and that the interests of the Natives are fully protected in the Agreement with the Anglo-Saxon Petroleum Company. Strikes are literally unknown within the State, and before the war there were no political troubles, no labour troubles and no paupers. There were no problems of unemployment, and there were no "poor Whites." On the basis of the trade figures, the people of Sarawak maintain a higher standard of living than the people of almost any colonial dependency or Crown Colony.

I am unable to agree that Prof. Le Gros Clark's article amounted to a "vicious attack on the Colonial Office." Whatever criticism the article contained was fair comment on a policy which demands a public explanation.

Sarawak can defend itself against all comers, but these questions of domestic policy are incidental. Principles of the highest importance are involved, which cannot be lightly ignored or brushed aside on the score that the annexation of Sarawak would be "for the best interests of the people" of that State. This is a comforting philosophy in these stirring times of widescale planning for the benefit of Humanity. But the principles involved can be flouted only at the risk of the most serious repercussions throughout the entire Commonwealth and Empire and in the wider realm of international relations. Quite apart from the fact that Sarawak is as large as England—or Malaya without the Straits Settlements—and is financially independent into the bargain, there is, in truth, no escape from the hard fact that Sarawak is not "British." The Agreement of 1888 between Sarawak and Great Britain is unquestionably a treaty between two independent States and operates within the field of international law. The Colonial Office would be no more justified in "planning" for Sarawak than "planning" for (or annexing?) Transjordan after that country has attained the status which Sarawak has already enjoyed for more than a hundred years.

Is it not time that the Colonial Office set aside their high-handed attitude and came out into the open with a public explanation of a course of action which, on the face of it, is inconsistent with every declaration on Imperial policy made by His Majesty's Government during the past twenty years, and which, if given the blessing of His Majesty's Government, would make a mockery of the preamble to the United Nations Charter. Sarawak remains a test case.

31 Prince Albert Rd.,
N.W.8.

Anthony Brooke,
Rajah Muda of Sarawak and
Head of the late Provisional
Government.

ALLIES IN AUSTRIA

Sir,—Following publication of the article, "Austria Forks Right," in your issue of December 29th, this office instigated enquiries in Austria concerning certain of the writer's allegations and the replies we have received may be of interest to you.

(1) The figure of "nearly a million" for the occupation forces is exaggerated by several hundred per cent.

(2) It is untrue that a British refusal to release "surplus" railway trucks prevented the carrying out of the barter agreement with Czechoslovakia. In the first place, the exchange of iron ore from the British Zone against Czech coal from the Soviet Zone is proceeding satisfactorily; in the second place, there are no surplus trucks in the British Zone.

(3) The Danube barges in the American Zone are there because a collapsed bridge makes it impossible for them to be moved down the Danube and not because the Americans refuse to release them.

(4) The British authorities did not refuse to allow the Slovene minority in Carinthia to put up candidates at the General Elections.

(5) The allegation that local officials have been dismissed for political reasons may refer to the reconstitution of nominated local government "bodies" in the British Zone to bring them into line with the election results until such time as municipal elections can be held. The statement that the Austrian Government has been powerless to deal with these dismissals implies that they intervened without success; they have not, in fact, intervened at all, and the Provincial Governments concerned are known to agree with British policy in reconstituting local government organs.

(6) It can be stated categorically that no Croat

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It is not claimed that conditions in Austria are perfect, but substantial progress has been made in the task of regeneration and the British contribution towards what has been achieved is by no means inconsiderable.

G. W. HOUGHTON,
Director Public Relations.

Control Office for Germany and Austria,
Norfolk House,
London, S.W.1.

[Mr. Ennals writes: "I am glad my criticisms of Allied administration of Austria have reached the proper quarter. My information on conditions in Austria was mainly obtained from personal interviews with the leaders of the three Austrian parties and with other government officials and from discussions with Allied Occupation officials who were themselves concerned about certain features of Allied administration. The ventilation of well authenticated criticism can only assist in the regeneration which all friends of Austria are anxious to encourage.

The Occupation force figure of "nearly a million" was given me by a high Austrian authority and was confirmed by other Government officials. The *Observer* recently estimated the figure at 950,000. If there are less than 300,000, as your correspondent suggests, this is good news indeed, but I think it will come as a surprise to both Chancellor Figl and the Austrian man in the street.

I am glad to hear the barter plans are going through, as the hold-up in November was a source of considerable anxiety to the Austrian Government. The American explanation of the barge delays is original, but is not confirmed, either by Liberal M.P., T. L. Horabin, who was in Vienna for the elections, or by other M.P.s who returned from Belgrade with the same story as that given by the Austrian Chancellor to an American journalist and quoted by Vienna Radio. Dr. Renner said: "We attempted to reach agreement with Hungary to exchange Austrian pit-props for Hungarian coal, but the discussions broke down because there were no means of transport on the Danube. There were barges in the American Zone, but these could not be used *because the Americans were afraid they would not be returned.*"

The dismissals to which I was referring were unconnected with the elections. One case involving the dismissal of Austrian Socialist officials in Klagenfurt was taken up by Dr. Renner himself.

I believe I am right in saying that the British authorities prohibited further political activity on the part of the Liberation Front of Slovene Carinthia two weeks before the Austrian elections. Only "Austrian" parties were allowed to fight the elections. How quickly we forget our friends! From 1943 to 1945 these Slovenes of Carinthia had the distinction of being the only Allied armed force operating on the territory of the Reich and of protecting the only British military mission which ever operated on German soil before Hitler's retreat. Since the Liberation these partisan veterans complain that freedom of press and public meeting has been denied them by British officials in the name of Austrian territorial inviolability!

The employment of Nazis and Yugoslav Quislings in local police and administration is clearly contrary to British policy, but both Austrians and Yugoslavs have quoted so many cases of it in both Styria and Carinthia, that I still think it would be wise to consider carefully accusations of this kind. The Slav partisan is not always a gentleman, but he usually knows a Nazi when he sees one."—Ed., *N.S. & N.*]

GERMAN TRADE UNIONISM

SIR,—Neither "British Officer" nor Mr. Lawther have really indicated the basic issues confronting the German Trade Union Movement at the present time.

The first problem is that of the powers to be vested in the Trade Union centre. In all four zones of Germany, the Trade Unions are being re-established as all-embracing organisations in which workers and salaried staff of all categories and political views can be included. While the term "*Einheitsgewerkschaft*" originally only meant this, it has now come to mean a structurally unified Trade Union Movement. In this country, in Europe and in America, industrial unionism is gaining ground, and attempts are being made to bring about necessary structural changes by planned amalgamation. While the German trade unionists may never have heard of suggestions along these lines made by British Trade Union Congresses, the older workers remember that plans for structural reorganisation were drafted in 1929–32 by the democratically elected German T.U.C., and they do not see why they should go back to a Trade Union structure already obsolete 15 years ago. But the real bone of contention is the distribution of power between individual unions and the Trade Union centre. Trade Union centres derive their powers from congresses composed of delegates from affiliated unions. The British T.U.C. delegation was confronted by the problem that no democratically elected central body controls the provisional Trade Union centres. The same thing was true in Italy, Czechoslovakia and Poland, after the Nazis were driven out, until constituent congresses had been held. At the same time, in some parts of Germany, there is a tendency to give the Trade Union centres wide powers over the policy of the unions. Up till now, no Trade Union paper has appeared in the Western Zones of Germany, and democratic discussions on more than a local level have been impossible. It now appears, however, that there is general agreement in Germany about some structural questions, notably the pooling of financial reserves and administrative facilities, with far-reaching co-ordination of Trade Union rules and services. But the final distribution of power between the Trade Union centre and the individual unions is still under discussion.

Some local Trades Councils in Germany stress that they regard provisional centralisation as necessary under present conditions. In Czechoslovakia the first Trade Union Congress has already transformed the provisionally centralised T.U.C. into a T.U.C. based on widely autonomous unions. We may expect similar decisions from the first German Trades Union Congress, and the British T.U.C. could be most helpful in assisting the speedy summoning of regional and even national congresses and by providing a short survey of the different suggestions put forward on the controversial issues by unions outside Germany.

The immediate issue, however, is that raised by "British Officer," who pointed out that to-day there are no genuine Trade Unions in Germany at all, that all four Occupation Powers deny them bargaining rights. In fact, German Trade Unions are little more at present than Trade Union propaganda committees, and their activities restricted to a local basis. No miners' organisation covering the whole Ruhr has been allowed and the Ruhr miners are unable to follow Mr. Lawther's advice "to perform something useful for those employed in the industry . . . along the lines that the miners have adopted practically everywhere else in the world." German Trade Unionists asked for full Trade Union rights including bargaining power, though they agree that all wage agreements might be subject to the veto of an economic authority in order to prevent an inflation.

If full Trade Union rights in the field of bargaining, and of workers' representation in economic reconstruction are not granted, the way is open to an attempt to shift the whole burden of reparations and reconstruction on to the German working-class and that, of course, would affect working conditions in other countries, including Britain.

TRADE UNIONIST

BURMA

SIR,—Please allow me to comment on a letter signed by the Chairman and Secretary of the Fabian Colonial Bureau in your issue of 19th January. But I wish to assure those concerned that I enter into this correspondence not in the spirit of partisanship in what is merely, as far as I can make out, a family squabble between a Labour Party leader and the Party's sister organisation.

1. I am not quite sure, as claimed by Mr. J. F. Horrabin and Miss Rita Hinden, whether "within the last few months" Burma has been "put far on the path to Dominion Status," because, as far as I know, the Governor—nominated Executive and Council, which are functioning at present and may do so until 1948, mean the turning back of the constitutional clock for at least a quarter of a century.

2. It is true that, for the first time, during the last debate on Burma in the House, the Under-Secretary of State for Burma, Mr. Arthur Henderson, had

POSTAGE on this issue is: Inland, 1½d.; Foreign, 1d.; Canada, 1d.

definitely stated in the House of Commons on November 2nd, 1945, that Burma would attain full self-government before the end of the present Parliament. But the way His Majesty's Labour Government has refused to receive a deputation from Burma of a representative and progressive political organisation, the anti-Fascist People's Freedom League, to discuss constitutional matters and to contact progressives in this country; and its silence on whether the maximum intermediary period of three years of the suspension of responsible self-government, which Burma had enjoyed before 1942, is to be used as an opportunity for overseas interests to re-establish themselves in the economic control of the country as in the past, make not a few wonder whether "the plan is a delaying tactic." For "if outside interests are to control the economic life of the country, political self-government may turn out to be a mockery—and the Burmese understand this as well as anyone." (*Empire*, July–August, 1945, p. 2.)

3. The anti-Fascist People's Freedom League desires a General Election for a constituent assembly, which will frame a constitution the people of Burma want, to be held not later than next November, by universal adult (18 years) suffrage. I think it may not be out of place to quote one of the League's spokesmen, U Than Tun, on this subject. He said: "General Elections can be held even now . . . We want to satisfy our political aspirations first, and then we will carry on the reconstruction. That is the opinion of the whole of Burma, I should say. The reconstruction is part of our national work rather than the task of the British. We want to raise Burma from the ashes by our efforts. We will naturally not deny outside help. At the same time we want to satisfy ourselves that it is with our own hands that we have remade Burma. . . . We want to emphasise the fact that Burma has changed a great deal. . . . We want to reconstruct a Burman Burma and not a British Burma.

"We want to assure the British public, when we demand independence, we do not mean that we are going to be enemies of the British. We want to remain on friendly terms with Britain. . . . We think that freedom is our birthright. We will have it in any form we like. . . . We may seek entry into the British Commonwealth. But the thing is we want to decide it for ourselves. We wish to feel that we can exercise our sovereign rights even if it means going back to the British Empire."

16 Mount Square,
N.W.3.

MAUNG OHN,
Representative in Britain of
the Anti-Fascist People's Freedom League
and the All-Burma Youth League.

"DUBBING"

SIR,—It is good news that contracts have been made for a continuous supply of French films for British cinemas; continuity of supply is an important feature in building up an expanding clientele for such pictures. I hope that pre-release exhibition of untranslated versions of these films will be given in London and other large cities, but I do not agree with William Whitebait that the attaching of English sound tracks is necessarily a "sausage machine" process.

The translation of the French dialogue and the speaking, recording and fitting of the English dialogue, is work requiring not only technical skill but creative and interpretative ability. Provided sufficient time is allowed and that the right people are on the job, there is no reason why a completely satisfactory result cannot be attained, and although I admit that the medium is not so easy as printed translation, it is conceivable that recorded translations may occasionally be an improvement on the original, as FitzGerald's was on Omar's Rubáiyát.

I have had practical experience of "dubbing" in Italy, where no foreign films were allowed to be shown without a dubbed Italian sound track; I have also worked in this country with French experts; in neither case did I find consistently perfect results—because, for reasons of economy, unsuccessful work had sometimes to be passed—but constantly the results were so startling in their reality and effect, that it was difficult to believe that the dubbed translation was not an original interpretation. I can therefore assure Mr. Whitebait that he has nothing to fear, providing that time, money and talent are not spared. The best translators, writers, directors, artists, film editors, and sound recordists are essential, but they *must* have ample time. Dubbing is generally done on the cheap; to do it really well should cost double what is usually spent, but it still would be a fraction of the cost of shooting the picture.

ADRIAN BRUNEL

First House, Bulstrode Way,
Gerrards Cross, Bucks.

CRIME AND PUNISHMENT

SIR,—Sentence of 14 years' penal servitude was passed at the Old Bailey last week. The offender was found guilty of serious offences against four boys.

Many recent cases come to mind, where the offence has been at least as great and the sentence very much milder—the recent Treason trial, with the prisoner guilty and sentenced to 5 years; a case of the wife killed for infidelity; and a case of the attempted murder of the wife's lover. The legal penalties for homosexual offences are severe; society's reaction to this crime is hysterical. Even so, 14 years is surely going rather far, and it cannot be intended as a therapeutic measure for the man has been in prison twice before, once for 3 and once for 6 years, for similar offences.

Mr. Justice Oliver, on passing sentence, observed "All I can do is to pass a sentence that will protect children for a long time." It must have been disagreeable to the judge to be forced to send a man to penal servitude for 14 years in order to keep him away from little boys; but was there really no other way?

VALENTINE ACKLAND

BURGLARY INSURANCE

SIR,—After reading the article on "The Crime Wave," in your last issue, I wonder if any of your other readers have had an experience similar to mine?

On notifying my insurance company recently of a change of address, and increasing the valuation of my property (at their suggestion), I received in return a letter, regretting that in view of the very unfavourable burglary experience in the West London area, they were unable to insure my property against the risks of burglary, housebreaking, larceny and theft.

This seems to me very unfair, as I have been insured for all these contingencies on the same policy, at five other addresses, for about ten years without making one claim.

B. R.

AUSTRIAN CHILDREN

SIR,—We have recently received from an officially sponsored Austrian Welfare organisation, of which Dr. Renner is the President, an appeal for temporary hospitality in this country for a number of Austrian children whose health is seriously threatened by the present lack of adequate food and clothing. The children, who are between the ages of 10 and 14, have been carefully selected and steps are being taken to give them the necessary instruction to enable them to adapt themselves easily to life in England.

We cannot approach the authorities for permission to bring the children here until we are in a position to assure them that we can guarantee good homes for them. We appeal, therefore, to any of your readers who may be willing to receive one of these children for a period of three to six months to get in touch with us immediately. The question is urgent for without speedy help from abroad many of these children will die.

ELLA STACEY,
Honorary Secretary.

"Friends of Austria,"
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BOOKS IN GENERAL

The editors of the new Oxford History promise a complete history of English literature in twelve volumes. Each volume is to be " an independent book," the work of a single writer, " but the whole series will form a continuous history from the earliest times to the present day." These volumes will contain not only the literary history of their period, what the prose artists and the poets were doing, but also all that is relevant to literature in the history of ideas " political, philosophical, scientific and social." It can be seen at once that the author who undertakes a volume of this history has a formidable task. To succeed in it he must have, to begin with, a scholar's diligence, patience and selective discrimination, to enable him to explore and to arrange the mass of heterogeneous material. But scholarship will not be enough. It is not only assimilated and ordered knowledge that will be required of him, but also catholic taste and critical discernment, since he will need to appreciate justly whatever variety of prose and verse there may be in the period of his choice. Nor is even that all he will need: scholarship and critical insight must be matched by the gifts of a writer, for such a comprehensive history will be one man's vision of an age, and the art of writing is essential to the communication of a personal vision.

The period 1600 to 1660 is peculiarly rich in all the aspects these histories set out to explore. It is rich in the formulation of political theory; not only the hodmen but the men of genius gave their best energies to political speculation during the stormy years of the civil war. The noble extravagances of Winstanley, the keen, calculating, worldly logic of Hobbes, the uncouth grandeur of Milton's fighting prose are only some of its products. The wealth and variety of religious thought is even more overwhelming; whilst in the history of science this period has no rival until the age of Darwin, since it includes Bacon's pioneering generalities, the great discoveries of Harvey and Gilbert and the founding of the Royal Society. All this is the literary historian's background. In the foreground is a wealth of prose and verse, more various than is to be found in any similar length of years. There is the elaborate prose of the early 17th century, the work of Robert Burton, of Sir Thomas Browne, or of Jeremy Taylor, prose whose content may be religious or scientific, but which, by virtue of its style, disturbs and enlightens beyond what the mere sense can account for. Alongside, meanwhile, was developing a prose " free from amplifications and swellings of style," which Bishop Sprat, the historian of the Royal Society and those like-minded with him, desired because they thought a " naked " style would reveal the naked truth. And when the literary historian turns to the " other harmony " he is met by a peculiar challenge and opportunity. It is not only that his period includes great wealth of lyrical poetry, both secular and devotional, and that it also includes Milton, supreme among the English poets (with the one obvious exception) despite all attempts to dethrone him. The period is also a challenge and an opportunity because it has attracted so much attention in our time and been so variously assessed. Donne and his influence have been praised, overpraised, attacked, defended, with more violence and partisanship than the poetry of the past usually calls for; and Milton's fate in the twentieth century has been even more strange. Everything about his work has been matter for controversy; not only his powers as a thinker, moral, political and theological, but even his genius as a poet has been in dispute. The historian of the period 1600–1660 has a task to perform that only a many-sided genius could adequately accomplish in all its aspects. If Mr. Bush only half succeeds it does not follow that any living writer could have done better.

The weakest section of his book is that which deals with the poets from Michael Drayton to Denham and Waller. These and all who intervene are disposed of in ninety odd pages with a brave, misguided attempt at completeness, so that disaster is inevitable. The disaster is that nothing clearly emerges and that the reader is immensely bored. How can it be otherwise when he is often given little more than a list of names and a faint-hearted attempt to group them around a centre of influence:

> So far we have been concerned with Jonsonian cavalier poets, and the frequency with which the name of Donne and the word metaphysical have occurred illustrates the impossibility of any clear-cut distinction between the two schools.

Who can care? The reader looks on for the name of some poem that has stirred him; presently he finds a reference to:

> That fascinating enigma *The Phœnix and the Turtle,* which was printed in Robert Chester's *Love's Martyr* (1601), along with poems on the same theme by " Ignoto," Marston, Chapman and Jonson (who was represented by the " Epode " and its appendages).

And that is all. Would not total omission have been better? Again, one paragraph of twenty-two lines contains the names and dates of no less than six poets with such remarks about them as that one " could on religious themes strike genuine sparks of metaphysical fire," and another " displayed fanciful humour and rural realism along with metaphysical wit, and real intensity of thought and feeling in his Anglican and royalist carols." If so little is to be told, would not the mention of the names in the exhaustive tables at the end of the book have been equally illuminating? When Mr. Bush writes of John Donne himself as a poet he does not attempt to disguise his personal distaste, and he avoids discussing the *Songs and Sonnets* by a chronological quibble:

> Chronology excludes from this volume the definitely early poems and, where chronology is uncertain, logic must put with them the rest of the short poems concerned with love and women, including whatever ones were addressed to Mrs. Donne. All these, of course, we cannot forget in reading Donne's other works and the works of his disciples, but our direct interest is limited to *The Progress of the Soul*, a number of occasional pieces, the two *Anniversaries,* and the divine poems.

About none of these has Mr. Bush anything illuminating to say. The beautiful meditative *Litanie*, written in 1609, is dismissed along with " religious poems written before Donne took orders," which, we are told, " were more or less impersonal and artificial." And those written afterwards were seemingly too personal and too undisguisedly felt.

> No one can fail to recognise Donne's extraordinary expressive power, yet we may (or may not) feel that his experience and utterance are so peculiarly personal and so restricted that he is, as *religious* poet, much more remote from us than his chief successors.

To say that " we may (or may not) " is an excess of caution which leaves us where it found us.

It is mainly in this section of the book, where inspiration flags, that the reader is irritated by blemishes in the writing. For instance, of Donne's *Divine Poems* we are told: " wit is still his natural medium, but it is purified by fire, and paradoxical antitheses are dissolved in the blood of Christ." Or, of Herrick: " In recent years he has been either disparaged or ignored by critics who, having been weaned on a pickle, are not inclined to suck on country pleasures, childishly." This might pass as an after-dinner joke if it represented the writer's genuine thought; but he apparently shares a preference for more troubled devotional poetry, since the paragraph ends, " we should do more justice to the simple beauties and pieties of *Noble Numbers* if we had not heard the deeper and more personal note of the greater souls of Herrick's time." In more shockingly bad taste is the meaningless paragraph opening: " The largely metaphysical texture of this chapter may permit the juxtaposition of the blameless Habington and the noseless Sir William Davenant," while it is bad taste in another sense to suggest that Wordsworth's moments of vision are moments of " auto-intoxication or escape " in order to say that Vaughan's were not.

But the reason for all this must be that Mr. Bush is not interested in the minor poets. When he writes about political, scientific or religious thought he writes well. Admirable also is the chapter on Milton with which the volume ends. The recent debates about the poet are seen in their proper perspective, and the manifold interest of Milton's work is set out in a clear chronological survey. It is difficult to imagine a more lucid or more just introduction to Milton in so short a compass. The background chapters have similar virtues of lucidity and arrangement as well as a fine sweep of knowledge. Great and familiar individual writers such as Bacon, or Burton, or Browne fall into place among their contemporaries and acquire new meanings and values as one reads these chapters. As a scholar Mr. Bush succeeds admirably; his width of knowledge is impressive, and the scholarship in the body of the book is well supported by the scholarly apparatus at the end—the almost embarrassing wealth of bibliography and the invaluable chronological table. Whatever faults one may find, the final judgment of the book must be that it supplies the student of the period with a guide which, with regard to all matters of fact, is solidly dependable.

Joan Bennett

Oxford History of English Literature. Edited by F. P. Wilson and Bonamy Dobrée. Vol. V. *English Literature in the Earlier Seventeenth Century.* 1600–1660. By Douglas Bush. *Oxford Press.* 21*s.*

SHORT STORIES

West Country Stories. By A. L. Rowse. *Macmillan.* 8*s.* 6*d.*

Best Stories of the Sea. Edited by Thomas Woodroofe. *Faber.* 10*s.* 6*d.*

Best Ghost Stories. Edited by Anne Ridler. *Faber.* 10*s.* 6*d.*

> The love of one's native place is, I believe, the foundation of all patriotism. It is only natural that wherever later in life we may wander, we should look back with affection to the first and smallest horizons of which we are conscious, the horizons of our childhood and of our home . . .
>
> There is nothing more warming to the imagination, or that adds more savour to living in the country, than to come upon the track of interesting memories, stories, traditions attached to some place right under your nose when you never suspected their existence.

These two quotations form Mr. Rowse's declaration of faith, both as a man and as a writer. He combines a fiery local patriotism with a restless and imaginative antiquarian curiosity. No doubt he would claim that the two aspects of his faith were inseparable, and indeed in the best of his stories they often seem to be so. But there is, in fact, a certain stridency, an excess of protestation in his devotion to Cornwall which one never hears in the wiser and gentler tones of Mr. Rowse the historian. It is the declamatory patriotism of the Anglo-Indian, and Mr. Rowse is himself half an exile from his beloved Cornwall. " I am Cornish," he shouts on every page of this book, " and you are not to imagine that I shall ever forget it."

This is a pity, for it leads at times to that depressing lack of discrimination which is the all too frequent concomitant of intense patriotism. He would not, I feel sure, have thought such stories as *The Beneficent Shoes* or *The Wicked Vicar of Lansillian* worthy of his pen unless they had been so very Cornish. Indeed, with the exception of *The Stone that Liked Company*, I cannot feel that the ghost stories in this book are very successful. They are modelled on M. R. James, but the contrast which is forced on our attention is not advantageous to the pupil.

But fortunately less than a third of the book is marred by this weakness. In such simpler and more direct anecdotes as *How Dick Stephens Fought the Bear* Mr. Rowse's imagination and curiosity run harmoniously together with the happiest results. And for the restrained passion of the antiquarian and historical sketches which fill more than half the book, I have felt that intimate admiration which is also an affection for the writer. Here he is a master. He has Trevelyan's genius for making the past as vivid and actual to us as the present, and love of his native place adds a lyrical quality which is rare indeed in a historian. The chapters on *The Duchy of Cornwall* and *Cornwall in the Civil War* are as exciting as most ghost stories. They are subjects with a minimum of intrinsic interest for me, yet the writer's enthusiasm is contagious and irresistible. It is fact and not fiction which fires Mr. Rowse, and the fact is never dry, but living, mysterious and poetic.

"Best" is a provocative word and the compilers of the two Faber collections seem to invite the choosy disputation of critics by their use of it. It is quite arguable, for instance, that half the best English ghost stories were written by M. R. James, and half the best sea stories by Conrad. Yet there is only one story by each of these writers in each collection, and the James is not happily chosen. One sea story by Conrad and as much by "Bartimeus"! Nothing by Richard Hughes or Masefield, and only one rather poor fragment of W. W. Jacobs! As much space devoted to the dreary fictitious documentary of "Sea Wrack" as to Melville! With Miss Ridler's selection I have much less to quarrel, but her field was far more limited and therefore far easier. Personally I find *The Canterville Ghost* an intolerably boring piece of whimsy: reduced to an eighth of its length it would do very nicely for *Punch*. When Wilde fails, he fails abysmally.

In this book Wilkie Collins and Le Fanu do not shine with quite the undimmed phosphorescence which I had expected, but Henry James shows that even in ghost stories nothing but a true psychological *idea* can persuade us to suspend our disbelief. I had never before read *The Friends of the Friends*. It is very Jamesian and very, very good. This is not the kind of story which makes us look anxiously behind us; but it gives the profound and almost agonising discomfort which Kipling describes so well in *The House Surgeon*. In fact rather than terror it provokes a sort of vivid, intolerable grief. At the very opposite extreme is the ill-written and over-insistent absurdity by E. F. Benson. This is the worst sort of ghost story, for in every sentence we are told how frightened we ought to be.

By a strange coincidence I read Miss Ridler's volume on the first evening for many years that I have spent alone in a lonely house. There was a storm outside, a millpond and even a broken door which slammed and slammed. Yet my only genuine moment of terror (and I am susceptible to terror, even avid for it) was when I read the last sentence of Philip MacDonald's *Our Feathered Friends*. If only the execution had been better, this would be a model hair-raiser. There is just one thing wrong, horribly wrong, in a world of the most banal normality. In a demented wood the birds do not behave as they should. My own particular and private terror involves nothing worse than a simple physical contradiction. It is a terror of the disease called autoscopia from which both Musset and Maupassant suffered. I imagine that I come into a room and see myself already sitting there. It is as simple as that, and somehow its simplicity is the horror of it.

There are many stories in both these books of which I would like to write with enthusiasm. Elizabeth Bowen, Algernon Blackwood and Walter de la Mare are altogether admirable in Miss Ridler's collection. Shalimar, Morley Roberts and the editor have made excellent contributions to the sea stories. Both books make extremely enjoyable reading, and it is astonishing to find so many jewels of skill and imagination from writers whose gross achievements are so much less impressive. While I think that Miss Ridler has made the more discriminating selection, Mr. Woodroofe's is the more entertaining book. The sea, after all, is a more natural subject, and in another than the obvious sense. To write about the sea because one knows the sea so well is a proper and direct, almost an inevitable thing to do. To write about ghosts is to be deliberately literary, to be almost unavoidably self-conscious. Therefore the minor writer (and few major writers appear in these two books) is likely to write better about starboard, squalls and hatches than about ghosts which he has never seen, heard or felt.

PHILIP TOYNBEE

PITY AND TERROR

The Song of the Cold. By EDITH SITWELL. *Macmillan.* 7s. 6d.

A re-reading of Miss Sitwell's early poetry will show that it anticipates more of her later grandeur than one had thought. Nevertheless, we are bound to find in her magnificent later poems, all of which she has now collected and rearranged in this volume, something else at once purer and less inhibited, more widely-ranging and less trammelled by the merely fanciful than anything in her earlier work. It is as if we found in the less fragile passages of *The Sleeping Beauty*, in the *Four Elegies*, in some stanzas of the early version of *Metamorphosis*, and in a few other poems, a passion and a pity hammering at a huge door which the poet cannot open, or cannot keep open for long. The war may have been incidental in opening it, though one prefers to think of it swinging calmly open by itself at an awaited but unpredictable moment—a moment when ripeness is reached, when the depths can be fathomed, and a dignified, powerful vision be objectified with resourcefulness and ease.

Ease; but not always ease for the reader. We cannot often involuntarily commit whole groups of lines from these poems immediately to the memory, as we can in reading a new Eliot poem for the first time. But this is a physical matter. After all, who is easier to commit to memory than Housman, whose tiny lines fasten on to the stickier parts of one's mind like clusters of flies on to fly-paper? And Miss Sitwell, whose single lines sometimes reach out twice across the page, is correspondingly elusive. It is momentous single lines that remain with the greatest tenacity: lines which are able to affect the reader with far more than their "meaning," so that a fragment may stay and move him whenever he thinks of it, even if he has entirely forgotten its context.

> Though the dust, the shining racer, overtake
> me . . .

That is enough to disturb the mind, without a context.

> Over the long and the light summer land . . .

That, equally unsupported, is enough to calm it. There are other unexpected things in Miss Sitwell's poetry; it is less epigrammatic, it is more flowingly musical, than almost any other kind of English verse. Precision is not its first aim; if one may estimate its first aim, it is continuous impassioned song; and even in its darkest moments, Miss Sitwell's poetry has an accumulative and rhapsodic quality. If this were all, it would get neither us nor its author very far; but always in these poems there is a hard core, a glowing centre, which appears with a sudden amazing vividness, and which, as one rereads, irradiates its surroundings from end to end. Here is a wonderful sustained passage from the

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Ship to Shore
WILLIAM McFEE
In his new novel, William McFee shows the complications that occur when the British captain of a luxury liner falls in love with a New York business girl. Their contrasted personalities and the situations that arise are depicted with all the skill that marked the author's previous successes. *Derelicts, Spenlove in Arcady*, etc. 10/6

The Old Man
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new poem which gives its title to this collection:

The miser Foscue
Weaving his own death and sinking like a spider
To vaults and depths that held his gold, that sun,
Was walled in that grave by the rotting hand of the dust, by a trap-door falling.
Do the enormous rays of that Sun now warm his blood, the appalling
Empty gulf of his veins—or fertilise
His flesh, that continent of dryness? . . . Yellow, cold,
And crumbling as his gold,
Deserted by the god of this world, a Gold Man like a terrible Sun,
A Mummy with a Lion's mane
He sits in this desert where no sound of wave shall come,
And Time's sands are of gold, filling his ears and eyes,
And he who has grown the talons of the Lion
Has devoured the flesh of his own hands and heart in his pain.

The present volume contains all Miss Sitwell's poetry of the war-years; and she has included several poems related in spirit which date sometimes from much earlier days; it is pleasant to see the true depths of one or two of the earlier lyrics revealed here. One feels perhaps less certain about the inclusion of the remarkable *Gold Coast Customs.* It is the outstanding poem in Miss Sitwell's *Collected Poems,* and it undoubtedly anticipates the mood of her well-known tragic *Lullaby* ("Now the world has slipped and gone"). But its technical make-up is of a quality so different from that of the later poems that the bizarre music of its deliberately limited and eccentric orchestra appears as an intrusion here; and it must be added that the music of the later poems is of an overpoweringly higher order. The latest poems—*A Song of the Cold, Eurydice,* and particularly the poignantly elegiac *The Poet Laments the Coming of Old Age*—are the summit of Miss Sitwell's achievement; an achievement one may not casually assess.

HENRY REED

FAR EAST

Solution in Asia. By OWEN LATTIMORE. Preface by C. P. FITZGERALD. *Cresset Press. 7s. 6d.*

Owen Lattimore is a distinguished writer on China, which was his birthplace and his residence for most of his life. Political adviser to Chiang Kai-shek from 1941 to 1942 and then the head of the O.W.I. Pacific Section, he has acquired knowledge and insight in official circles both Chinese and American. Above all, he is an advanced thinker who believes in democracy in the East as well as in the West, but he is not afraid to say that the word must necessarily have different meanings in different countries with different traditions. This is an embarrassing view in Britain with its centuries-old belief in British supremacy, and to offset such embarrassment the publishers of the English edition of Owen Lattimore's book asked an equally distinguished Chinese expert, a British official, to write a Preface putting the other side of the argument. Mr. Fitzgerald realises that the period of colonial imperialism is over, but his Preface reflects the uncertainty of British policy in the Far East rather than any fallacy in Owen Lattimore's general argument.

Owen Lattimore knows China more intimately than any other part of Asia; as a result he interprets Asia too narrowly. Most of his book is confined to lectures given in 1944 before the collapse of Japan; naturally he underrates the importance of the nationalist awakening in countries which for a century or more were occupied by Western Powers and which at first tended to regard Pearl Harbour as a victory of East over West. Nevertheless, in a brilliant chapter "War, Prestige and Politics" he recognises the change in the "prestige of Powers holding colonial possessions" as the central theme of Asia to-day. The theory of White superiority was exploded by Japan's successes. The fact that she was subsequently defeated will not revive that theory; the Asiatic mind which tends to be non-violent argues that the Allies refrained from using the atomic bomb on the White race but found the Japanese people a convenient testing-ground. To this must be added the fact that the Asiatics living in colonial territories regarded the war as one "between their old masters and would-be masters." "Politically," Owen Lattimore correctly foresaw, "neither the British nor the Dutch can ever hope to restore a colonial 'loyalty' which never really existed."

Although American policy may have been more liberal in the Philippines, he still believes that the association of America with Britain in the Far East means that "our prestige is now linked as closely with the prestige of others as our policies interact with the policies of others." This, however, omits a consideration which Lattimore unfortunately seems to overlook; namely, the cultural ties between Asia and the West which are more subtle than business contracts, but even more important in the long run of history. In the same way, in his chapter—one of the most interesting in the book—"The Politics of Attraction" he limits his definition to the "power of political attraction" held by Russia, America and China.

To the Soviet Union he attributes the major power of attraction in Asia. Its land policy "attracted the peasant majority and undermined the traditional authority of the landlords. At the same time, the Soviet nationality policy was reassuring." Soviet achievements, especially land reform, industrial development, and the campaigns for mass literacy proved the strength of Marxism to millions of people who had never heard the name of Karl Marx.

Here was a democracy based on the people, developed for a rural rather than for an industrial society. But Asia is mainly composed of rural areas. Democracy in the Anglo-American sense forms no basis of action and no power of attraction for an Uighur in Sinkiang province. Lattimore is vague about what America or China has to offer to the future of Asia and fails to pose the question whether the Chinese Communists have found any solution to the problem of democracy in Asia.

I hope Owen Lattimore will write another book based on new data which was largely unknown when he wrote *Solution in Asia.* America, and Britain too, will have to recognise the fact that during the period of Japanese occupation the people of Asia strengthened their own independence movements. To-day, they think in terms of equality; their colonial psychology is mainly a matter of the days before 1941. "The historical age of imperialism" Lattimore rightly says, is ending by a process of transition. "If we were to attempt to stop it, transition would only quicken into revolution. We can, however, help to guide the transition into relatively smooth evolutionary channels."

Though events since VJ-Day have altered the emphasis of his book, Lattimore's approach towards Asia is every day more relevant. It needs to be understood not only in America, but in Britain where a Labour Government, with an enormous majority of Members opposed to Imperialism, has the opportunity of working out an enlightened policy in Asia based on the independence of its peoples. Indonesia should have opened our eyes. Recognition of the Indonesian Government would not only

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THE BODLEY HEAD

convince Asia that Socialists meant what they had always said at Conferences, and in their publications for a quarter of a century, but it would help to bridge the wide gap between East and West. Or to put it in Owen Lattimore's words, " Asia will largely determine the degree to which the capitalist world and the collectivist world can co-operate. . . . Failure in Asia would doom our hopes for a co-operative world order. Success in Asia would prove the survival value of the post-war world order to which we are working."

DOROTHY WOODMAN

ANATOMY OF UNREASON

The Vulgar Heart. By DORIS LANGLEY MOORE. *Cassell.* 15s.

" A habitation giddy and unsure
Hath he that buildeth on the vulgar heart."

That is the motto of this book : " An Enquiry into the Sentimental Tendencies of Public Opinion." How superior and detached the reader at once feels. But the men and women who may, in the terms of this author's analysis, be called the " vulgar " are not necessarily the unlettered artisans and rogues towards whom Shakespeare showed such mordant antipathy ; they are very often ourselves, and, certainly, we know many of them well. They believe that " it is not comfortable to live at loggerheads with public principles " ; they receive their views ready made, and veil their uneasy consciences by accepting simplifying symbols (" Nature," " England," etc.) for complex realities ; they are the sentimentalists. Nice and ordinary people, they have sanctioned through the course of history, slavery, exploitation, oppression, wars, all manner of injustices, because public opinion, that " synthetic and perishable concoction," has allowed them.

There are various instinctive ways of deceiving ourselves about displeasing or embarrassing matters ; one, which we share with primitive savages, is word-magic. By euphemism, " oral fig-leaves," or the use of personification we think that we can change or conceal the nature of a thing, though to do this, observes the author, often requires " an eager suspension of the intelligence." We are all familiar with such letters in the press as the one she quotes suggesting that margarine would be more acceptable if called " butterine " or " art butter." The same necromantic use of language turns " England," " Russia," " Germany " into primitive deities with standards of values that would not be admitted by independent-thinking individuals in these countries. A simpler formula which is applied to unpleasing situations runs : " It would be pleasanter . . . it ought to be . . . it is." Thus Queen Victoria is, unplausibly, alleged to have replied to a question on prostitutes : " In my realms there are no such women."

Probing into other manifestations of superstition and sentimentality, Doris Langley Moore devotes chapters to the influence of the Churches, to forms of orthodoxy, to aspects of parenthood and to the position of women, and her documentation is both horrifying and fascinating. One example of the dangerous acceptance of abstractions is the cult of " innocence," which in practice has meant attempting to keep from children and even adult women knowledge of the elementary facts of human reproduction. She gives an instance from a school in America where the principal reported that it was inadvisable " for the school to shoulder the responsibility of shortening for these little ones their period of innocent childhood, and of awakening in them an interest in a topic for which they were not ready." " The same report," Mrs. Moore adds, " disclosed that a home for unmarried mothers in that vicinity had been receiving an average of two girls a month from this principal's school." " Let Us, When Talking to Children, GO BACK TO THE GOOSEBERRY BUSH " is the heading of an article by Mrs. Matthews, wife of the Dean of St. Paul's, in a Sunday newspaper, an article which it would be delightful to quote here in full. " Freedom," another deceptive abstraction, was a battle-cry in the Elizabethan period, when so many fortunes were being made by English patriots out of the slave trade. Queen Elizabeth owned shares in a slave ship (called the *Jesus*). The shameful conditions in which the labouring classes worked in the nineteenth century, and in which many of the natives of Empire territories live and work to-day, were and are accepted by those who use the word most glibly. " Loyalty " is an even more dangerous conception, though it has its absurd side as this extract from a letter written to an American paper by an inflamed British female patriot shows :—

> . . . One Englishman armed with antiquated weapons or only with the weapons of his own courage and determination is worth more than the whole Nazi might of tanks, sub-machine-guns and the rest . . . We just know that we can't be whacked. . . . We laugh at everything : even death. The kids here look upon war as an exciting sort of game. It's fun . . ., etc.

The most mischievous, long-lived and deep-seated superstitions, however, are those which the author examines in the chapter entitled, " The 'Ladies' and the 'Women.' " She investigates the fallacy that in work, in love, in marriage and in other important aspects of life women's requirements are different from men's and more easily satisfied, and that women have not the capacity for creative production. Parenthood, on the other hand, is invested with quaint and mysterious virtues. Mr. Beverley Nichols observed at a recent date : " I believe that the longer a man lives, the more he will realise that his mother was the wisest woman he will ever meet " —a statement whose fallacy it does not need a training in logic to detect. As for the Victorian mother of a large family, who, according to such impassioned authorities as Captain Ludovici, were supposed to receive all their sexual satisfaction from the production of children, the author disposes of this comfortable notion and shows how many of these women, sexually thwarted, unconsciously diverted their frustration into such things as an interest in flagellation ; the *Englishwoman's Domestic Magazine* of the early Seventies is full of correspondence from mothers on the various forms of inflicting corporal punishment. Our own recollection of the *Fairchild Family* provides variants on this melancholy theme.

But what emerges most clearly from the book is that, as the individual is superior to the crowd, so the individual judgment must be developed instead of the collective or " sentimental." As little may be done now with adults, our hope must lie in educating the young to the free use of reason and independent thought. In such responsible tasks as governing the country, writing in the press, even taking on the duty of parenthood, only those properly qualified should be permitted to take part ; thus, Members of Parliament should pass a test in history and sociology ; journalists should hold degrees in semantics—not altogether unreasonable suggestions.

This is so sane and salutary a book that it seems ungrateful to find fault with some of the author's conclusions. Yet she does occasionally fall into her own proscribed error of generalisation, as in her stricture on present-day schools and teachers. And I cannot think that, because prohibition would have made him more of an addict, Coleridge would have " drifted into sterile ruin," had the use of drugs been con-

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ROUTLEDGE

trolled by law. But these are small things. Mrs. Langley Moore's book is of the Erewhonian rather than the Utopian kind; her revelation of the follies of the age is clear and devastating, and if her constructive proposals tend to lack the same realism and drive, the book is no less valuable in holding up a mirror in which few of us will not see, peering uneasily from some corner, the reflection of a familiar face. NAOMI LEWIS

MASTERPIECES

Paolo Veronese—The Family of Darius Before Alexander. With an introduction by SIMON HARCOURT-SMITH. *Lund Humphries.* 4*s.* 6*d.*

Georges Seurat—Une Baignade, Asnieres. With an introduction by DOUGLAS COOPER. *Lund Humphries.* 4*s.* 6*d.*

Here are two new Gallery Books on Veronese and Seurat, the first with an introduction by a cultivated journalist, the second by a professional art historian. Those who write about pictures as a relaxation from their normal activities are often capable of illuminating comments and occasionally of flashes of insight, provided that they are content to remain strictly autobiographical, or in other words, confine their criticisms to personal sensations and prejudices. But as soon as they attempt to make use of the terminology of art history, group painters into schools, point out influences and detect developments of style, they are apt to find themselves treading on dangerous ground. Thus Mr. Harcourt-Smith can describe with vigour his impressions of the Palladian villas on the Brenta, the sumptuousness of Venetian manners and brocades, the pig-headedness of British parliamentarians; but a sentence like the following should have been more carefully edited or deleted altogether from his manuscript: "If Correggio at Parma and Michelangelo in Rome were the inventors of the Baroque mood, then this picture ['The Family of Darius' by Veronese] in point of time falls well within the age of it." In fact, the "Baroque mood" did not take possession of the minds of men until at least a hundred years after Michelangelo and Correggio, and the "Baroque" element that he detects in Veronese is nothing more than the residue of the artist's training in the mannerist traditions of Emilia, quite different in form, manner, and treatment of subject from the Baroque. "His professional career seems to have begun in 1551," says Mr. Harcourt-Smith, although Veronese's altar-piece in the Gallery at Verona was painted almost certainly three years earlier. And I am also doubtful whether "The Family of Darius" can be dated as early as 1561, and not at all convinced by the arguments employed. This book is full of misleading statements and historical inaccuracies. Nevertheless it should be studied by all admirers of Venetian painting if only for the detailed photographs, though the choice of some of these seems a little arbitrary, as though the camera had been allowed to play over the surface of the picture and click whenever it felt inclined.

In contrast to this, Mr. Douglas Cooper's study of Seurat's "Baignade" is one of the most thoughtful and serious volumes produced by the Arcade Gallery. He reproduces some beautiful details of the picture itself along with an imposing collection of preliminary works, both sketches and drawings; and his monograph attempts to sweep away many misconceptions that still persist in people's minds on this subject. Mr Cooper is fully justified in insisting on the democratic character of the "Baignade," in opposition to the accepted interpretation of Seurat as in some way precious and unapproachable. Though unquestionably the most impassive of mass observers—one cannot quite visualise him stripping off his clothes and plunging into the Seine with nothing on but a bowler—Seurat did at least sit down on the river-bank near Asnières for several years watching other people indulge in commonplace frolics, and he did mingle with the crowd in circus and music-hall, instead of trying to give expression to private spiritual torments like most of the other talented young painters of his time. Critics in the past have been too much concerned with the technical or purely formalistic aspect of Seurat's picture to be able to recognise it as the noblest representation of lower middle class leisure produced by the nineteenth century. And the mistake that is commonly made is to assume that the rigid organisation of the picture-space and the simplification of forms must necessarily exclude a humanistic view of life. In point of fact Seurat's scientific training is intimately bound up with a deep sympathy for ordinary human beings, just as in the early fifteenth century in Florence, science and humanism moved forward together hand-in-hand. All this is stated by Mr. Cooper or implied; and I reproach him only for having omitted from his analysis any reference to the fantastic character of Seurat's bathers, notably in the man lying full-length on the bank and in the horses introduced into some of the preliminary sketches. Seurat's specific brand of fantasy which becomes even more pronounced in his later work, had I believe a stronger influence on the formation of Lautrec and "art nouveau" furniture than is generally admitted. BENEDICT NICOLSON

THE TWO MARITAINS

Adventures in Grace. By RAISSA MARITAIN. *Longmans.* 15*s.*

Art and Poetry. By JACQUES MARITAIN. *Poetry, London.* 6*s.*

Perhaps realisation always provides less sympathetic material for autobiography than hope. In the second volume of her autobiography Mme. Maritain has sailed safely into the harbour of piety. One remembers with regret the incisive portraits of the Sorbonne professors in *We have been Friends together*, and that sketch, charming and nostalgic, of the two young philosophy students walking through the Tuileries gardens, talking of love and the possible existence of God. In this volume the Thomist philosopher has "arrived": the young couple are no longer troubled by doubt: the trumpets are sounding all the time for them and for their friends upon the other side.

The book is interesting, less for its literary portraits, this time of Rouault, Péguy, Psichari and the inevitable, unlovable godfather Leon Bloy, than for a quality Englishmen may find less sympathetic. Roman Catholicism takes extraordinarily different forms in different countries. One can contrast, say, the harsh, dusty, passionate religion of Mexico with the naive cleanly religion of the English minority: in the France of Bloy and Péguy and the young Maritain there is an unmistakable taint of the Third Republic; a group Catholicism continually splitting and reuniting, with excited misunderstandings and rhetorical gestures, combined with a self-importance that speaks of "our spiritual evolution" meaning the Bloy circle, or perhaps the Péguy circle, oblivious of the Catholic life going steadily and uninterestedly on outside Paris, in the wide countryside. The members of each circle are exasperated by the fact that *their* Catholicism is not universal—"the grief, the wound that was represented for us by Péguy's general attitude": "Jacques surrounded Ernest with solicitude."

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souls are wounded, souls go up and down stairs. I could not help being reminded of a chorus-girl whom I once heard uttering some friend's obituary: "He had such a beautiful brain." This convert is continually discovering in her group associates "a beautiful soul." It is a good thing to be humble in one's estimate of others as well as of oneself.

M. Maritain's *Art and Poetry* was written, if I remember aright, some years before the war. It is chiefly interesting for its studies of three painters, Chagall, Rouault and Severin; the study of Rouault in particular is of great interest—the "moon-clown"—a surprising blend of pity and bitterness, of malice and candour. There are traces of flamboyance in M. Maritain's style ("Has not each of us within him all the wounds of the human race?" a question to which the answer is surely "No. Of only one Man can that have been ever true") and a cloudy obscurity which may well be that of the too literal, and again American, translation; but the insight is often remarkable, as when he writes of Rouault's still-lifes that they "are like fruits ripened under the implacably pure sky of a world where everything is true."

GRAHAM GREENE

CAMBRIDGE IS MY PARISH

Letters from Cambridge. By A. S. F. Gow. *Jonathan Cape.* 10*s.* 6*d.*

The war is carrying in its uneasy wake a trail of log-books, photograph-albums, escape-stories and political gossip-dockets thrown overboard during the voyage. Here is something new; a book of letters, never intended to reach print, giving in balanced, elegant, yet sufficiently intimate prose a don's-eye view of a microcosm of specialised civilian life during the war years—Cambridge since 1939.

Mr. Gow is a classical scholar, Fellow and sometime Senior Tutor of Trinity College. In 1939 he decided, with considerable courage, to maintain a monthly letter-service (he calls it the Parish Magazine) to a group of some ninety of his former pupils. His aim was to keep in touch with them, to provide them with much-desired news of the life they had left, and—he admits it—to instruct them by the way in the history and habits of the senior side of the University. This is done so charmingly and with such courtesy that I am tempted to break Oxford's unspoken vow of "envy-Cambridge-nothing" over the record they have here of the town and the University at one of the most memorable points in their intersecting lives; Mr. Gow manages to convey the pleasantly memorable as well as the unforgettable—the liveliness of common effort as well as the agony of A.R.P.

In such letters as these it is inevitable that the writer should take a place second to his subject. Yet a clear picture emerges of the man, a little detached from life yet observant of the right way of planting crocuses under trees and of the strange psychology of war-time queueing. We hear his candid views on travel-books and contemporary fiction; his opinions on Sickert and Pissarro; his observation of London blacked-out under the moon, recorded with an eye trained to picture-galleries; his memories of driving through Italy and his accounts of brief war-time holidays in Wales. We observe the faintly acid scepticism, the acceptance of unfamiliar events, the sense of humour that records a railway poster in Cassino commanding briefly "Visit Peebles," and such little-known items of general interest as the chunkiness of American women—noted by *Life*—and Hitler's disinclination to have his portrait distributed on toilet-paper. The writer records ill-health with the same unexcited and balanced faithfulness to fact that he gives to the problem of Fire Guard Exercises, of which he was in charge. A final and assured set of values emerges through 250 odd pages, and to have found a writer with an unassuming self-effacement and a delicate appreciation of the graces of living that belie his claim to peevishness is worth as much as the picture he gives of his own academic community.

Mr. Gow expressly sets aside all commentary on the war outside Cambridge, for his audience was unlikely to desire further knowledge about such matters. So besides the monthly record of his own increased work, his cadet-examination and his Turkish baths, his parishioners are offered statistics of the fluctuating undergraduate population, details of the mysteries of university ceremonies, information on such local institutions—now unhappily fallen into disuse—as the Spinning House for those ladies of the town who met the University more than half-way, and detailed accounts of the changing face of Cambridge architecture and cooking. The writer manages to convey the impression, often so difficult for the uninitiated to grasp, that university life is by no means so leisurely as is often supposed, and for the past six years has been something of a recurring eight weeks' turmoil followed by a vacation only slightly less disturbed.

It is Mr. Gow's style that enchants. George Gordon's letters from Oxford, the most recently published academic letters which I can remember, are not comparable, as they were written as private letters to individuals and therefore have not the reasoned elegance, the patterned grace and clarity of this style, which never attains even semi-formality and which yet never drops from prose into mere chat. The author apologises not infrequently for his lack of sensational subject-matter, but one notices no such deficiency when he provides such a temperate and easily-read letter-prose. The level is so even and the tone so unforced and well-mannered that it is impossible to find one passage more suitable for quotation than any other; one paragraph grows into another, and the total impression, not the individual piece of "fine writing," is the value of the style.

Letters from Cambridge is beguiling even for those to whom Cambridge is no more than the other half of the Boat Race. There are two points over which I will not agree with the author; first, Oxford may not look particularly lovely from some approaches, but I shut my ears against the suggestion that it bears a resemblance to Wigan. And secondly, Mr. Gow, with possibly some concentrated satisfaction (remembering his admirable fury over the evacuant female students and the shortage of space in the University Library), claims gleefully that his letters shall never be called, like Pascal's, "intelligibles aux femmes mesmes." But with pictures in words, and the whole a delightful if one-sided conversation, what more can your mere woman desire?

SIRIOL HUGH JONES

Orion. *Nicholson and Watson.* 6*s.*

The second number of this miscellany is a respectable specimen of book production, thus differing from the first, which it resembles in the excellence and variety of its contents. Elizabeth Bowen's notes on the craft of fiction summarise succinctly the thoughts and experience of a great master in this craft; every sentence ought to be weighed and dwelt upon by all who write or review fiction. No more concentrated, stimulating and profound essay in constructive criticism has appeared for many years.

Highly interesting in a different way are some extracts from a correspondence between Virginia Woolf and Logan Pearsall Smith. Mr. Pearsall Smith suggests that Mrs. Woolf will be best remembered as a letter writer, but in this interchange of felinities he may be thought to have come off better because he never grew cross. Doubtless Mrs. Woolf's best letters were written to friends whom she liked and against whom she was not on her guard. Sir Osbert Sitwell's reminiscences of Sickert are brilliant, and include incidentally two marvellous anecdotes, one about Walter Taylor, the other attributed to Scham. Other features are uncommonly good stories by V. S. Pritchett, Margaret Lane and John Strachey, critical articles by Edwin Muir and Rayner Heppenstall; a variety of good verse and a strikingly well written account of Victorian Tooting by Eric Bligh.

Company Meeting

MARTINS BANK

NEW RECORD FIGURES

THE INDUSTRIAL OUTLOOK

THE 115th annual meeting of Martins Bank Ltd. will be held on Tuesday, January 29th, at Liverpool.

Mr. F. A. Bates, Chairman, has circulated with the report and accounts a statement in which he says:

Mr. J. M. Furniss, after fifty-two years' distinguished service, retired from the position of chief general manager at the end of July but will continue as a director on the General Board. Mr. James McKendrick was appointed chief general manager and Mr. Frank Voyce deputy chief general manager: both have long records of service in the bank and are thoroughly acquainted with its business.

The net profit for the year is £645,807 which is slightly higher than in the previous year. The usual dividends have been announced. Allocations have been made:—to the published reserve £100,000, to reserve for contingencies £100,000, to reserve for pensions £50,000, and to premises redemption £100,000.

A further expansion is shown in the bank's balance sheet. The amount due to customers on current and deposit accounts has reached a new record of £212,691,000 and the total assets having increased correspondingly exceed £230,192,000. Investments have increased by £7,656,000 and now stand at £68,653,000, but our holding of Treasury deposit receipts at £65,500,000 is smaller than a year ago. Advances show an increase of £2,485,000 during the year and there is now much more enquiry and activity in this department.

A new item in the assets is shares in the Industrial and Commercial Finance Corporation Ltd. We felt it our duty to take part in this effort to assist industry. In addition our management have been increasingly engaged in dealing with finance for our customers to facilitate the change over from war to peace-time manufacture.

As most business men could foresee, it was impossible for the world to concentrate for six years on the non-productive expenditure of war without ill effects ensuing. During the war man-power was available to manufacture only the minimum quantity of those goods which determine the standard of life of the nation, and even that low standard would not have been possible except for the partnership of our Dominions and Colonies and the United States of America.

The post-war problems of this country are concerned with shortages—shortage of labour, which demobilisation should remedy, shortages of houses, offices and factories, shortages of goods in the shops and shortage of international trade. There is one way only of solving these problems, and that is by stimulating the country's productivity and reviving international commerce.

Commerce calls for confidence and courage from which spring trade activities, large or small, in the furtherance of which the bank stands ready to provide every banking facility to its customers. How far regulated austerity on a national scale will affect the initiative and effort necessary for the expansion of our world trade remains to be seen but, while realising the need to avoid unnecessary expenditure, there is still the risk that over-emphasis of austerity may tend towards frustration in commerce and limitation of effort.

The inward and outward cargoes at our ports, the ships to carry them, the merchanting and other necessary services abroad, such as insurance and banking, will have to be worked for and organised in a competitive world, in sensitive markets and over ramifications of trade routes which cross link all the nations of all the seven seas. On success in re-weaving this highly complicated pattern of commerce, which needs all the practical experience that a trading nation can command, will largely depend our standard of life and also our strength in the future.

The Stock Exchange Official Year-Book, 1945. 80*s.*

The Stock Exchange Official Year-Book Supplement, 1945. *Thomas Skinner and Co., Ltd.* 20*s.*

Improved conditions and the removal of the ban on the publication of certain statistics have enabled the Editor of the Stock Exchange Official Year-Book to reinstate complete sections and include figures which had to be dropped during the war. The volume therefore provides once again very complete and detailed information on Government Securities, Public Companies and Corporations, British, Dominion, Colonial and Foreign Finance, etc.

The Supplementary Index, published concurrently with the main volume, has been completely revised and now contains references to thousands of defunct companies, together with their subsequent history. This arrangement avoids the necessity of hunting through indices of back volumes of the main work for particulars. Once again Editor, printer, papermaker, and binder are to be congratulated on the production of a tome which with less skill would be quite unwieldy owing to its enormous bulk.

The Jews and World Trade. By N. Barou. *Trades Advisory Council.* 280 Euston Road, N.W.1. 1*s.* 6*d.*

We too seldom meet dispassionate discussion of the social role of the Jews. This informative and timely pamphlet may do something to offset the loose exaggerations about the predominance of Jews in commercial life. By a careful examination of the economic structure of some of the main countries, Dr. Barou has shown just how far and why the proportion of Jews in some trades is so high. He has also put on record the considerable contributions made by Jewish enterprise both to the war effort and, in normal times, economic prosperity. This little book bristles with statistical facts and it is eminently useful to anyone who wants a brief appreciation of the position of Jewry to-day. If anti-Semitism is fundamentally a product of economic difficulties and social tensions, then a prerequisite of its elimination is a proper appreciation of the economic relations between Jews and other groups.

Week-end Competitions

No. 835

Set by Roger Marvell

Six guineas are offered for the best quotations upon any of the minor displeasures of life (e.g. putting too much cold water in a bath and then finding the hot tap run cold). Entries by February 5th.

RESULT OF COMPETITION No. 832

Set by Sam Smiles

The usual prizes are offered for a letter explaining to an uncle that the present sent to him was meant for someone else, asking him to return it, and promising to send on the one intended for him. Limit 150 words.

Report by Sam Smiles

Hundreds of entries, most of them variations on the two most obvious themes. Almost all assume that uncles are over seventy. Excellent entries come from C. S. Cook, L. E. J., Leslie Smith, R. J. P. Hewison, H. W. Comfort, Ronald Lewin, Joan Strawson, D. L. Chesterton and Douglas Clark. I recommend that the prize be divided between Allan M. Laing, Ira, Warren Sands, Cactus, A. M. P. and Charles Race.

Colonel Baseline Hohm-Frunt,
O.C. 9th Dropshires,
Eaver-on-the-Booze.

Dere Unkle it wasn't Dady who sed you had cold feat realy it wasn't. my presnts got mixxed up the bed soks were for grany. pleas send them back an i will send you the corksgrew I bougt for you with my one mony yure lovving nehpew.—Tom.

Allan M. Laing

My Dear Uncle,—Just how bewildered—and indignant—you must have been at receiving two Georgian candlesticks, I can well imagine! In extenuation, I ask you to picture *my* dismay when I discovered my error in addressing Jane's present to you, to whom I'd hardly be likely to offer something secondhand! I've already written to Jane to apologise for tantalising her with the latest Agatha Christie—destined, alas, to have whiled away many hours of the long Christmas for you. You shall have it in time for next week-end.

I know you will say that this is a typical result of my unmethodical ways—and how right you'll be!

Accept my thanks for the Players—how clever of you to remember my case holds twenty—and my belated wishes for a successful New Year.—Your Affect. Nephew, George.

P.S.—Please register the candlesticks—I'll pay of course.

Ira

Darling,—In the *whirl* of Xmas packing I made the most *atomic* error! The pipe I sent you was really intended as a *sweetener* for the grocer who has been *so* understanding about points and things ever since Daddy arranged a sort of *quid pro quo* Bretton Woods. (Daddy still grumbles about the terms—*just* like Lord Beaverbrook.) Cook reports that, ever since Xmas, Mr. Smith (the grocer) has developed a *menacing* sniff whenever she mentions extra fats—simply because I sent *his* Xmas present to *you.* So, *dear*, Uncle John, *please* be an angel and return the pipe—I have an *inspired* gift for you which will be sent immediately the pipe returns. Mr. Smith *assures* me that it is *quite* as good as real port and *sure* to tickle your palate.—Your shattered niece, Myrtle.

Warren Sands

Dear Uncle Edward,—I was distressed to lear to-day that I sent you the wrong book for Christmas, a mistake which you will have discovered if you saw the inscription "To Darling Johnny."

Johnny, alias Johanna, is an old school-friend who has recently been married, and not of course the John to whom I am engaged. The man at Smith's recommended the book as suitable for newly-weds; but I have since learned that Dr. Marie Stopes writes on very delicate topics. Had I known the nature of the book I should never have chosen it, and you will appreciate my consternation on discovering that I had inadvertently sent it to you.

I have asked Johnny to send back "The Queen Thanks Sir Howard" which I intended for you, and I am sure you will gladly return the book which is so inappropriate for a Rural Dean.—Yours affectionately, Ursula.

Cactus

Xmas 1775. To Bishop Lort Mansel, Master of Trinity College, Cambridge, from his niece Catherine, age 10.

Dear and Respekted Uncle,—Pray forgive your thoughtless niece for sending you the sampler of Horse and Hound instead of the text worked in a bookmark. Mama's Running Footman who brings you this will fetch the sampler, and Mama says please not to give him too much small beer at the Lodge for fear he lose his way crossing the fen. I tremble all over for fear of having vexed you dear uncle. My pussy Blanche has 6 kittens all brindled.—I remain your kontrite niece, Catherine

A. M. P

Vernae cujusdam ob errorem CLAUDIUM quoque constat in suspicionem veneficii venisse, nisi versiculis missis apud patruum se purgasset.

pseudo-SUETONII vita Divi CLAUDII

Si casu, TIBERI, miraris strena Kalendis
Cur patruuo talis missa sit, error erat.
Di faciant nondum gustaveris! ista veneno
Tinxerat (invenio vix ego) poma coquus.
Est proprium donum (quod missum rebar) apud me
  tres de perfidia saevitiaque libri:
Hos cape consilii comites! culpamque remitte
  pomaque: sunt aviae postmodo danda meae.

Charles Race

Personal

BEN Uri Art Gallery. Artists invited to submit work for "1946 Exhibition of Paintings and Sculpture by contemporary Jewish Artists." Feb. 10th to Mar. 10th. Forms from Sec., 14 Portman St., W.1. WEL. 3001.

TWO young men (doctor and engineer), European, who have lost everything, now in Czechoslavia, desire to contact person or body, able to offer them employment and arrange transport, anywhere away from white men. Write to Box A3907.

SCIENTIFIC and other translations from and into Russian. Scientists, publishers and other refs. Russ. lessons. Box A3957.

GERMAN and English taught by experienced teacher. Apply Box No. 17 c/o Pool's, Aldwych House, London, W.C.2.

EXCELLENT personal and postal courses on "Speaking in Public" by international lecturer and broadcaster. Details from Hilary Page, 66 Barkston Gardens, S.W.5. FRO. 4778.

HARTRAMPF'S Vocabularies and Word Chart—a godsend to all who use words. Scientific classification of synonyms, antonyms, relatives, associations. Send 1*d.* stamp to-day to: Psychology Publishing Co., Ltd., (Dept. NSN HV2), Marple, Cheshire.

YOUR handwriting is the mirror reflecting your hidden talents, your character and personality. Write for free leaflet, Institute of Graphology and Psychology, 15 Broad Court, London, W.C.2

BURNT, torn and moth eaten garments invisibly mended in two weeks. Send or call, mark damages clearly. Bell Invisible Menders, Ltd., 109 Fleet Street, E.C.4. Five doors from Ludgate Circus.

THE men who brought us final victory may count on the help of the British Legion in times of adversity, after Service. Please help them by a legacy to Haig's Fund, Richmond, Surrey.

PHOTO, Cine and Optical Apparatus, also accessories, in good condition, purchased for cash, exchanged, or sold on Commission. The London Camera Exchange Co., Ltd., 35 Bucklersbury, E.C.4. City 4591. (Mention *N.S.*)

Personal—continued

BERMALINE. The Bread we all enjoy. Ask your Baker.

NURSE Ollivier. Colds. Colonic Irrigation. Rheumatism. MAY 1085.

DUTTON One-week Shorthand. Test lesson, send 3*d.* in stamps. Write Dept. N.S., 92-3 Great Russell Street, W.C.1.

MONOMARK Service. Permanent London Address. Letters redirected. Confidential, 5*s.* p.a. Royal patronage. Write Monomark BM/MONO12, W.C.1.

WATCHES wanted, new, old, disused, or out of order. Top prices paid. Send registered. Cash or offer by return. Kay's (N.S.), 19 Hopwood Ave., Manchester, 4.

WHAT do Unitarians believe? Information and literature on receipt of stamp, from Mrs. Dickin, The Hill, Langport, Som.

RE-APPEARANCE of "Adam," International Review, edited by Miron Grindea. A monthly publication of Literature and Art in French and English. Contributions by Desmond McCarthy, Georges Duhamel, Raymond Mortimer, Gabriela Mistral, Wladimir Nazor, G. Milnes-Turquet, Victor Haynes. Price 1*s.* 3*d.* Annual Subscription 20*s.*, from 48 South Molton Street, W.1. (Mayfair 8735.)

Where to Stay and Restaurants

BOARD-residence in village in the South Downs. Good walking centre. Comfortable house. Wkly. terms fr. 3½ *gns.* Woodstock Guest House, Charlton, nr. Chichester.

A SHORT rest and change will enable many people to carry on. Lovely, peaceful surroundings, tranquil atmos. Tennis, Squash, many unique features, await you at Langdale Estate (N.), Gt. Langdale, Nr. Ambleside. Gras. 82.

SUSSEX, 1½ hrs. Charing Cross. Crowhurst Park Hotel and Country Club. Central heating, country prod. Informal atmos. Rough shooting, riding, from 4 *gns.* Batten, Battle 325.

SOHO'S post-war rendezvous—The Oak Tree Restaurant and Coffee Rooms 42/43 Dean St., London, W.1. Congenial atmosphere, fair prices, first-class cuisine. Lunches, teas, and dinners. Open Sundays.

Schools and Educational

BADMINTON School, Westbury-on-Trym, Bristol. Sound education up to University entrance, broad interests. No vacancies until 1947. Apply Head Mistress.

BEDALES School, Petersfield, Hants. A progressive public school for boys and girls from 11½—18. Separate jnr. school, 5—11. (No vacancies at present.) Estate 150 acres. Home farm. Headmaster. F. A. Meier, M.A. (Camb.).

BEVERLEY School, Wolfelee, nr. Hawick. Prog. Co-Educ. Children from 3 years. Healthy happy environment. Special attention given to diet. Entire charge, arrangements made for children with parents abroad.

FORMOSA School (Junior Co-ed. 50), Epping House, Hertford. Quaker Fröbel basis. A few "problems" taken if intelligent. Rec. by doctors and psychiatrists. Mrs. Beamish, B.A., A.R.C.M. Essendon 341.

HILLGROVE School, Bangor (N.W.), sane education for boys and girls, 5—13, good food, happy atmosphere, graduate staff; 31 *guineas* a term. Prospectus from C. S. Chapman, M.A. (Oxon.), Headmaster.

HURTWOOD School, Peaslake, Guildford. Co-educational day and boarding to 14 yrs. Constructive outlook. Tel.: Abinger 119.

MALTMAN'S Green, Gerrard's Cross, 9 to 19. Founder, Miss B. Chambers, M.A. Head Mistress, Miss Theo M. Lowe, M.A. Aim: to develop character and intellect, respect individuality and encourage initiative.

OAKLEA School (recog.), Buckhurst Hill, Essex. Girls, 7-19. P.N.E.U. Oxford Exam. Centre. Prin.: Beatrice Gardner.

PINEWOOD, Amwellbury, Herts. Home school for boys and girls, 3 to 13, where diet, environment, psychology and teaching methods maintain health and happiness.—Elizabeth Strachan. Tel., Ware 52.

SHERWOOD School, Epsom (9125).—A co-educ. Commun., aiming at indep., init. and friendliness. Schl., Higher Certs.; boarding, day (exc. centre for Wimbledon, Sutton, Kingston, Leatherhead).

Lecture Courses and Specialised Training

PENDLEY Residential Centre of Adul Educ. Week-end Courses. Feb. 1s to 4th, "The Film and Education." The Film and the Class-room. Visual Education, The Film as a weapon of Education, The Misuse o the Film and the improvement of taste Terms: 30*s.* a week-end: 3 *gns.* a week All partics. from Secretary, Pendley Manor Tring. (Tring 2302).

WEEK-End Conference, Brighton, Fr dinner-Mon. breakfast, Feb. 15-18 Lectures on current problems, discussions music, dancing. From 37*s.* 6*d.* Partics. from Progressive Soc., 26 Buckingham St., W.C.2.

UNIVERSITY of London, School of Slavoni and East European Studies, London W.C.1. Two free Public Lectures at 6 p.m. Mons., Jan. 28th, Feb. 4th, "Slavs and German in Central Europe," by Prof. O. Vocadlo.

THE Psychology, Physiology and Mechanic of Piano Technique. 24 lecture-demon strations by James Ching, M.A., B.Mus (Oxon.), Saturdays, at 3.15, 14 Hanover St. W.1. Jan. 26th: "The Co-ordination an Differentiation of Physiological Processes." Lectures available in printed form. Full partic from Secretary, James Ching Pianoforte School 21 Wigmore St., London, W.1.

UNIVERSITY Correspondence College pre pares students for London Universit Matriculation, Special Entrance. Intermediat and Degree exams. Highly qualified tutors. Lo fees, instalments. Prospectus post free fro Registrar, 70 Burlington House, Cambridge.

Accommodation Vacant and Wanted

TO let, West Kensington top floor, 3 rms. £2. Please state prof. Box A3260.

TO let till Easter. South coast s.c. furnishe flat. Living-room, bedroom, kitchen bathroom. £2 2*s.* p.w. Box A4211.

TWO students, f., req. bed-sit.-rm. an board, nr. Regents Pk. Box A3258.

JOURNALIST urgently requires small fla furnished or unfurnished, in quiet sur soundings. Must have heating facilitie bathroom and separate entrance. Box A415

Company Meetings

LLOYDS BANK LIMITED

BURDEN OF AMERICAN AGREEMENT

THE Annual Meeting of Lloyds Bank Limited will be held on February 1st, at the Head Office, London.

The following is an extract from the statement circulated by the chairman, The Rt. Hon. Lord Balfour of Burleigh, D.L., with the report and accounts :—

Our profit at £1,630,000 is substantially the same as last year. Our current, deposit and other accounts have shown a further expansion and are £48,000,000 higher at £868,000,000. Bills show an increase of £48,000,000. Treasury Deposit Receipts, although showing a fall of £25,000,000, are still our largest asset at £290,000,000. The rate of interest on these was reduced in October and this reduction will have a serious effect upon our future earning capacity so long as such a large proportion of our resources has to be employed in that manner. Our investments are up by £17,000,000 and there is a gratifying increase of £13,000,000 in advances to customers. We are ready and anxious to assist commerce and industry in developing peace-time activities and to provide facilities for financing the country's vital export trade.

AN ONEROUS BURDEN

Referring to the financial agreement with the U.S.A., I feel bound to record my view that the financial burden we have been asked to assume is disproportionately onerous and the period within which current sterling receipts are to become freely convertible is dangerously short. Such terms were rendered acceptable only by the inclusion of article 12, which gives us the right to require reconsideration of any of the provisions should the conditions of international exchange justify it. Our major problem is to reconvert our industry to the arts of peace and to raise our efficiency as rapidly as possible to the highest pitch. Only so can we hope to secure on competitive terms our full share of the immense export trade which will be at our command if the way can at last be opened to trade that is genuinely free. It cannot be repeated too often that unless we can export we cannot maintain, let alone raise, our standard of living.

BRETTON WOODS

With our export trade in view, therefore, we cordially welcome the Bretton Woods Agreement, the first international attempt in history to secure stable exchanges in the interest of international trade other than by the old rigid gold standard. We are also able unreservedly to welcome the American proposals for consideration by the forthcoming international conference on trade and unemployment, re-assured as we have been that we shall enter into the negotiations completely free of any prior engagement or implication which might have been harmful to inter-imperial trade relations.

Summing up the net result of the Financial Agreement, the Bretton Woods Agreement and the American agenda for the trade conference, which must be taken as a whole, I would say that, disappointing as the Financial Agreement may seem to us as a reflection of the common effort which led up to the common victory, the arrangements none the less are full of hope and promise for the future, it is to the future that we now must turn with confidence and determination.

BANK OF ENGLAND BILL

At home, a general election has resulted in the return for the first time in our history of a House of Commons predominantly Socialist. The first fruits of the event, for us, have been the introduction into Parliament of the Bank of England Bill. At the time this statement goes to the printer the Bill has been passed by the House of Commons with minor, though to us helpful, amendments Whether the introduction of a certain rigidity where formerly there was flexibility will do harm, the future alone can show.

The Report of the Cohen Committee appointed to make recommendations for the revision of the Companies Act, recently published, is of outstanding interest and importance. I welcome the decision of H.M Government to implement the Report by legislation but I hope that the details will be very carefully scrutinised and considered in the light of what is really practicable and reasonable.

MIDLAND BANK LIMITED

EXTRACTS from statement by the Chairman, The Most Hon. The Marquess of Linlithgow, K.G., K.T., on the Report of Directors and Balance Sheet for the year to December 31st, 1945.

In commenting upon the balance sheet, reference was made to the fact that the reserve fund had been raised to an amount equal to the paid-up capital.

The statement then observes :

The past year has seen the beginning of the changeover from war to peace conditions. Already there has been a marked increase, not only in the volume of routine work, but also in the number of propositions and inquiries placed before us ; there is no doubt reconversion is gaining momentum. A particularly gratifying revival is shown in the business of our overseas departments.

VICTORY AND OPPORTUNITY

The experimental spirit has been at work in the field of finance no less than in other branches of our national life, and the war has pressed forward the incorporation of monetary management within the general scheme of economic direction to the end of greater steadiness and general prosperity. The process has reached out to affect the banking system in several ways, through the close interaction of public and private finance and increasing co-operation between Government authorities, the central bank and the commercial banks.

A change is shortly to take place in the constitutional relations between the authorities and the banking system. For a very long period, including two great wars, the people of Britain have enjoyed immunity from banking failures—a record unsurpassed, if not indeed unequalled, in any other part of the world. This fact has fostered such ingrained confidence among the public in the security and ready availability of money placed with the banks that the changes, brought about by proper constitutional process, have been unaccompanied by any sign of active concern or uneasiness as to the maintenance of so fine a record. I think we may take it as a silent tribute to the banks, as well as to the intentions of the Government, that no untoward reactions have been seen from so delicate a legislative project

LONDON'S AID TO COMMERCE

Over the years, bankers, Treasury officials, traders and business men in all parts of the world have come to accept without question the security of funds placed in London and to recognise in the most practical way its incomparable services in international commerce It is this that has laid the foundations for what we now know as the sterling area ; it is this element of well-grounded trust which has led not only various parts of the Empire and foreign countries closely associated with Britain in mutual trade, but others of more remote connection, to use London as the principal agency for their external financial operations. They do this not under any political pressure, but simply as collections of shrewd and well-informed individuals assessing with complete realism and proper self-interest the facts and the prospects in Britain and elsewhere. Here, too, there has happily been no sign of uneasiness abroad as to the effects of the constitutional changes.

ADAPTABILITY OF THE FINANCIAL SYSTEM

Coming to quite recent times, we see the same process of adaptation going forward. Two years ago my predecessor announced the readiness of this bank to consider, in the interests of post-war business enterprise, applications for advances " based as much upon the character, integrity and business capacity of the borrower as upon the extent and nature of his own material resources ", and already the total amount of these small " special advances " exceeds one and a half million pounds, while their number has run into four figures. The past year, moreover, has seen the establishment of two new finance corporations, each with special functions in the promotion of business enterprise and improvement, and the banks have gladly undertaken to play their part in the provision of necessary funds and in ancilliary tasks of co-operation.

WESTMINSTER BANK LIMITED

IMPROVED RESULTS

HON. RUPERT E. BECKETT'S STATEMENT

THE annual ordinary general meeting of Westminster Bank Limited will be held on January 30th, at 41 Lothbury, London, E.C.

The following is a summary of the statement by the chairman, the Hon. Rupert E. Beckett, circulated with the report and accounts :

The accounts for the year 1945 revealed a position of strength and liquidity. The total of Current and Deposit accounts was £43,000,000 above the previous year's figures, and would have been considerably higher but for substantial withdrawals in October and November last, when the public made large investments in the 2½ per cent. National War Bonds, 1954/56 and 3 per cent. Savings Bonds " B " 1965/75, in anticipation of the withdrawal of these tap issues from the market, which took place on December 15th last. The increased deposits had been directed into liquid assets, and there had been a welcome increase of nearly £8,000,000 in Advances.

The results of the year's trading, after providing for all taxation, including National Defence Contribution, showed a profit of £1,405,592, against £1,366,907 for 1944, and were the best since 1939. The dividends were the same as for 1944.

The Government had decreased in October last by ½ per cent. the rates on Treasury Deposit Receipts and on Treasury Bills, and the Call Money rate had followed suit. As 48.79 per cent. of the Bank's money lodged was employed under these three heads, it was obvious that these changes would bring about a substantial depletion of income. The Clearing Banks had met this to some extent by eliminating interest allowed on Current Accounts and making a uniform rate of ½ per cent. allowable on Deposit Accounts.

Westminster Foreign Bank had been able to present accounts covering all the activities of the company during the past six years—accounts which showed a profit in spite of the trials and tribulations of the countries in which it operates. The business of Ulster Bank Limited was in a very sound condition, and the Ulster Bank directors had transferred £500,000 from " Reserve for Contingencies " to " Reserve Fund," raising the latter to £1,500,000

TRADE PROBLEMS

Six years of world war had naturally affected our nation and Commonwealth in varying degrees, but these small islands had felt the strain perhaps more than any. Certainly this was so in an economic sense. Our financial and trade problems had grown to such magnitude that ordinary methods of stinting and saving would make little impression on the burdens we carried, and a new approach—a policy of expansion rather than contraction—was essential. Expansion demands new capital, with which to set our house in order, and in our present position only one method—that of borrowing—was open to us.

The nation had recently elected to office a Socialist Government, which seemed bent on pressing forward with all speed its programme of nationalisation for many major industries. The Bill to nationalise the Bank of England included in its provisions power to " direct " the commercial banks. The banks of this country had a reputation second to none throughout the world, and had withstood the searching blasts of two wars. They had proved themselves time and time again willing to follow the lead of the Bank of England in forwarding national interests. Why, then, were the activities of the commercial banks to come under the dead hand of officialdom ?

Industry as a whole was in a state of perplexity and indecision at present, at the very time it needed every aid and encouragement to go forward, because of the unknown scope and detailed working of nationalisation. How could our industries be expected to plan ambitious programmes and put them in train until their anxieties were allayed and their future status made clear ?